

**THE CONSTITUTION  
OF  
CHRIST MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**THE CONSTITUTION**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the members of Christ Memorial Lutheran Church, set forth in this Constitution and its Bylaws pertinent rules and guiding principles according to which the spiritual and material affairs of the congregation shall be administered.

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this congregation shall be Christ Memorial Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE AND MISSION**

Basic to the understanding of the Life and Ministry of Christ Memorial Lutheran Church are the Commands of Christ to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20) and to love one another as He has loved us (John 15:12).

We recognize that, as the Church we are the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:23) – a Community of Faith and Love (Eph. 3:14-19) founded upon the Word of God and the Apostles' teaching (Eph. 2:20). It is, therefore, our Purpose as God's people in this place to:

1. **PREACH AND TEACH THE GOSPEL** (Luke 24:46-48; Eph. 4:11-16) Provide for instruction in the Christian life for all people at all age levels and situations of life. Plan for growth in Christian maturity among all members of our congregation.
2. **UNITE IN WORSHIP AROUND WORD AND SACRAMENT** (Acts 2:41-42; Col. 3:16-17) Offer a rich tapestry of Christian tradition and variety; provide a comfortable context for prayer, praise and thanksgiving.
3. **BE WITNESSES FOR CHRIST TO ALL PEOPLE** (Acts 10:34-37; 1 John 4:7-14) Encourage and enable each member to come to an understanding of his/her personal relationship with God in Christ and develop an ability and willingness to put that understanding into words and actions.
4. **EXERCISE FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER** (Phil. 2:1-4; Col. 3:12-15) Look for ways to express and develop our unity in the Body of Christ. Promote a

genuine affection for one another within the family of the congregation. Foster a willingness to sacrifice to meet the needs of each other.

5. **EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE** (Gal. 6:1-10; 1 Peter 4:8-11)  
Seek challenges and possibilities to respond to the needs of others. Recognize the uniqueness of each individual and give talents and abilities the opportunity to grow. Cultivate a concern for community, with a desire to reach out intentionally with the offer of service for the sake of Christ.

### **ARTICLE III – DOCTRINAL BASIS**

This congregation holds all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament to be the inspired Word of God, and the sole rule of faith and life. It accepts all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, vis-à-vis;

The three Ecumenical Creeds (The Apostolic, Nicene and Athanasian),  
The Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530,  
The Apology of the Augsburg Confession,  
The Catechisms of Luther,  
The Smalcald Articles,  
The Formula of Concord,

as a correct exposition of the Christian doctrine taken from, and in accord with, the Holy Scriptures. Accordingly, no doctrine, which conflicts with, or sets aside, the foregoing norm of doctrine shall be taught or tolerated in this Congregation.

All congregational service-books, textbooks, and teaching material shall be in conformity with the doctrinal norms defined by this Article.

### **ARTICLE IV – SYNODICAL AFFILIATION**

1. The congregation shall be affiliated with The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, or its successor, so long as the Confessions and the Constitution of said Synod are in accord with the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of our Church as laid down in Article III of this Constitution.
2. This congregation shall, to the best of its ability, collaborate with such Synod and assist it in effecting all sound measures intended for the up-building of the Kingdom of God.

## **ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP**

1. **Baptized Membership**  
Baptized Members are those members who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God, including those on the membership roles who have not yet confirmed their baptismal vows, and are under the spiritual care of this congregation.
2. **Communing Membership**  
Communing Members are those Baptized Members who have completed the required course of instruction relative to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, have received the approvals defined in the Bylaws and participate in the Sacrament.
3. **Confirmed Membership**  
Confirmed Members are those Baptized Members who are baptized in the name of the Triune God, publicly declare their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and confirm their commitment to the doctrines held to by this congregation as defined in Article III of the Constitution.
4. **Voting Membership**  
Voting Members are those Confirmed Members, eighteen (18) years of age or older, who accept and comply with all the provisions of the Constitution and its Bylaws.
5. **Termination of Membership**  
Members who voluntarily sever their connection with this congregation, or who have been released or transferred, or do not continue in agreement with or fulfill their obligations as defined in Article V of this Constitution, or who have been excommunicated, or exclude themselves according to the provisions of the Bylaws, shall be deemed to have terminated their membership in this congregation along with all rights and privileges of such membership.

## **ARTICLE VI – GOVERNMENT**

1. The congregation, through its Voting Members, shall have the supreme power in the external and internal administration and management of its own ecclesiastical and congregational affairs. Whatever may have been ordered or decided by individuals or minor bodies within the congregation shall be subject to revision and final decision by the congregation. Not even the congregation, however, shall be empowered to order, enact or decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church. Any such contrary ordinance, enactment or decision shall be null and void.
2. The Voting Members of the congregation shall, as defined in the Bylaws, elect such leadership from its membership and provide such other administrative

organization, as they deem appropriate to carry out the Purpose of the congregation.

3. Regular meetings of the congregation shall be held as designated in the Bylaws. Special meetings of the congregation may be called when due notice is given pursuant to the provisions of the Bylaws.
4. All Voting Members in good standing may participate in the administration and management of congregational affairs.
5. In order to serve as President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, an individual must be an active member of the congregation for at least six (6) months from his/her membership date and have served on a church committee.
6. It shall be the duty of every Voting Member to attend Voters Meetings. By failing to attend a meeting, the member waives the right of casting a vote during such meeting.
7. Any Confirmed Member may be appointed to serve on a board or committee through the process defined in the Bylaws.
8. The filling of the Pastoral Office of this congregation, as well as all other Called Offices, and the electing of officers of the congregation, shall ever be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated to an individual or to a minor body or circle within the congregation.

#### **ARTICLE VII – PASTORAL AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL OFFICES**

1. The Pastoral Office in this congregation shall only be conferred upon such ordained ministers as profess acceptance of and adhere to the tenets of this congregation as set forth in Article III of this Constitution.
2. The Parochial Teachers and other professional Staff of this congregation, called or contracted in accordance with the Bylaws, shall likewise conform to this requirement of profession (Article VII-1).

#### **ARTICLE VIII – RIGHTS TO PROPERTY**

1. The congregation may receive, acquire, hold title to, manage, sell or dispose of real estate and other property to aid in accomplishing its Purpose.
2. If at any time a separation should take place in this congregation on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits therewith connected

shall remain with those members who shall continue to adhere to Articles III and IV of this Constitution.

3. In the event this congregation should ever be dissolved, the property and other assets of the defunct congregation shall be turned over to The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, Eastern District, its successors or assigns.

### **ARTICLE IX – BYLAWS**

This congregation may adopt such Bylaws as the accomplishment of the Purpose and Mission of its organization may demand.

### **ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS**

1. Articles III, IV, V (3), VI (1 and 7), VII, VIII (2 and 3), and X (1) shall be unalterable and irrevocable.
2. Amendments to the alterable sections of the Constitution and the Bylaws may be made when:
  - A. recommended by –  
a majority of the Church Council, or,  
a majority of the Voting Members at a duly called meeting, and
  - B. written notice of the proposed changes has been provided to all Voting Members  
at least one week prior to the meeting in which the amendment is to be voted  
upon, and
  - C. the majority of the Voters present approve the amendment without change.
3. Changes to the Constitution shall be submitted to the Eastern District of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, for approval.