

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
TIPTON, IOWA

CONSTITUTION

BYLAWS

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

Based on ELCA Model Constitution as revised for our local congregation during the fall of 1995.
Approved at Special Congregational meeting on December 3, 1995.

Revised January 2018.

**CONSTITUTION
FOR TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
TIPTON, IOWA**

of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

1995

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MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS

***PREAMBLE** We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

C1.11. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa.

Chapter 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

- *C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- *C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a.** Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b.** The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, 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.
 - c.** The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- *C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- *C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- *C2.05.** This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- *C2.06.** This congregation accepts the other confessional 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 further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- *C2.07.** This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- *C3.01.** 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.
- *C3.02.** The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01.** 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.
- *C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as 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.
 - 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.
- *C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
 - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- *C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. (Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.)

- *C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- *C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- *C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
 - a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - d. approve the annual budget;
 - e. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - f. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - g. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - h. elect its [officers,] Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution[,] [and] bylaws[,] [and continuing resolutions];
 - i. and terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04. This congregation annually shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

- *C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- *C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- *C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
 - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.
- *C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
 - b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
 - c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
 - d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
 - e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
 - f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
 - g. If this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. If this congregation was established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive

synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- *C6.06. If this congregation is considering relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- *C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Southeastern Iowa Synod.
- *C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons 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 maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
 - a. Baptized members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
 - b. Confirmed members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.

- c. **Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year.**
 - d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran [Christian] congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.
- *C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- *C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
 - b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
 - c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- *C8.05** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. death;
 - b. resignation;
 - c. transfer or release;
 - d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
 - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern. (See Bylaws Section 2).

Chapter 9.

THE PASTOR

- *C9.01** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.02** Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- *C9.03** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
 - b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
- c.** Every pastor shall:
- 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA.
- *C9.04** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:
- a.** The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, no later than 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions;
 - 4) physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
 - b.** When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
 - 1) the bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop personally shall

investigate such conditions together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson.

- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament as disabled. Upon removal of the disability and the restoration of the pastor to health, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.
 - e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
 - f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for discipline, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of this church's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- *C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- *C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- *C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation.
- *C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to

accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

- *C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from *C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.12.** The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod. The pastor shall be a member of the congregation that has extended the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of ten percent 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.
- C10.03** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays Or by mail to all [voting] members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04.** **Fifteen percent** of voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05.** Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06.** All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.
- C10.07.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS

- C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president and secretary.
 - a.** Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
 - b.** The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.

- c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.
 - d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02** The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 5 additional members of the congregation, for a total of 9. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.
- C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for 3 years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C12.03.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. **The congregation, at the next annual meeting, shall elect a successor to complete the unexpired term.**
- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation 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 oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it 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 or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.

- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide units of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting 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 Iowa, except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to 5% of the total budget for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than 10% in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
 - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
 - g. The Congregational Council shall appoint a Treasurer and Financial Secretary from the congregation's voting membership.
- C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11.** The Congregation 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.

C12.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the **Executive Committee**.
- C13.02.** A **Nominating Committee** of four voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03.** An **Audit Committee** of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.
- C13.04.** A **Staff Support Committee** (in the absence of a staff support committee, their duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office, for members other than the President, shall be two years, with two members to be appointed each successive year. The President and the Pastor will each appoint one. The President and Pastor are members of this committee. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term.
- C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a **Call Committee** of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06.** Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07.** Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it 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 its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council [and specified in a continuing resolution].

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council.
- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
- *C15.03.** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council, who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

 - a. censure before the council or congregation;
 - b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
 - c. exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- *C15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- *C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered by the Congregation Council upon receipt evidence that injustice has been done or of repentance and amendment.
- *C15.10.** Adjudication
- *C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16.

BYLAWS

- *C16.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C16.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- *C16.04** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01.** Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least 10% of the voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- *C17.02.** A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:
 - a.** be approved at a properly called meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b.** be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting;
 - c.** be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting;
- *C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA.
- *C17.04.** Whenever the Model Constitution for Congregations is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a simple majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a 19 copy thereof to the synod, consistent with *C17.03.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- ***C18.01.** The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.
- ***C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

120 W. 7th Street
Tipton, Iowa 52772

BYLAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION 1995

B1.01.

(As required by Art. III, Section 3, of the Constitution)

The New Testament defines the church as the body of people gathered around the Word of God and the Sacraments, in the name of Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, in order to worship the Triune God, to nurture and edify each other, to fellowship with each other, to witness to Jesus Christ to the world, and to serve each other and the world.

In his own life, Jesus presented to the world a radical new lifestyle. He called his followers to imitate his life--"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem (set free) many people." (Mark 10:45). The new life and strength, peace and joy, that we find in our Lord and his community, the church, enable us to live our lives for the sake of others.

This mission of living for the sake of others begins in Baptism, where we are united with Christ and raised to newness of life and given grace to imitate our Master (Romans 6:4). By our Baptism we are empowered to carry out five specific functions of Christian life mentioned in the New Testament. These include:

(1) a. Worship (Leitourgia): This is the action of the Christian community in praising God for his gift of Christ and in offering ourselves in grateful response as his agents and servants in the world. At the center of worship is the proclamation of God's Word and the ministration of the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Worship inspires, refuels, and equips us for our other Christian tasks.

As a congregation, we attempt to make each of our gatherings on the Lord's Day a real celebration of God's presence and love among us. And we are mindful that worship is not for Sundays only, but is part of every-day life, and so we seek also to practice the presence of God in our personal and family devotions during the week.

(2) Nurture (Paideia): includes all the various kinds of education and learning that we undertake as God's people. Such nurture finds its basis in God's Word and in the educational materials published by the church. By such study of the Word, members of the congregation are strengthened and prepared to turn outward to the world in mission.

As a congregation, we educate by means of Christian Education classes, Confirmation classes and Bible studies. This ministry of nurturing our members in God's Word has as its goal the informing and stimulating of members toward growth and maturity in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

(3) Fellowship (Koinonia): includes all activities where we share life together with our fellow believer--wherever we share our faith, our hope and love, our joys and sorrows, our victories and defeats. Fellowship is learning to care for each other life members of one family.

As a congregation, fellowship occurs every time we gather together as a group. We foster such "family-feeling" by evening fellowship groups, congregational dinners and coffee hours. We promote fellowship through the cicle meetings of the Women of Evangelical Lutheran Church Association, the Committee meetings, the Jr. and Sr. Choirs, and the Luther League. Fellowship is especially evident when we assist our fellow members who are in Christ's Body in any kind of need or distress and when we set aside our personal desires and wishes for the sake of the welfare of the whole congregation.

(4) Witness (Martyria): includes all we do that imitates Christ our Lord--all that makes Jesus present to others by our words and deeds. Witnessing is a whole lifestyle--telling another of God's grace and mercy in Christ; demonstrating God's mercy through acts of loving concern; living with loving harmony and forgiveness in our families; maintaining our integrity and honesty on the job; standing against injustice and oppression in society.

As a congregation, we bear witness to our Lord through our Evangelism program which involves contacting new people moving into our community and inviting them to join us in worship. We bear witness by seeking to regain our inactive members and attempting to knit them back into active participation in the life of the congregation. Other ways in which we bear witness are through our vacation Church School each summer and by our ecumenical involvement with other churches in our community. All that we do that causes others to say, "See what love they have for their Lord and each other," is a form of witness.

(5) Service (Diakonia): includes doing good to all people, reaching out with compassion to the poor and needy, the oppressed and underprivileged, regardless of their race, color, or social status. Christian acts of service are a response to the service and blessing we have received from our Lord. We simply pass on his loving concern to others.

As a congregation, we serve by seeking to improve our stewardship, by setting a challenging benevolence goal and striving to reach it, and by supporting also the other special 22 mission programs of the Synod and whole Church. In our community, we serve by means of the activities of our Social Ministry Committee, especially by participating in the worship program of our County Care Facility and local nursing home, and by being alert and ready to help any who have special needs in our community.

Section 2.

The annual meeting of the congregation shall be in January of each year.

Section 3.

Any inactive member, whose life status is unknown and who would be greater than or equal to 100 years of age will be removed from the Roll of Membership.

Section 4.

Duties of the Officers of the Congregational Council:

Subsection 1. The president shall preside at meetings of the congregation and the church council. In the event of the president's inability to serve, the vice-president shall preside.

Subsection 2. 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.

Subsection 3. The financial secretary shall receive and keep record of all income from contributing members and other sources.

Subsection 4. The treasurer shall keep the books of account of the congregation; and shall receive (from the financial secretary) all funds and disburse them on proper orders, making monthly remittance of benevolence receipts to the treasurer of the synod.

Subsection 5. The treasurer and the financial secretary shall make written report of all financial transactions to the church council monthly and to the congregation, together with a satisfactory audit, at its annual meetings. All financial officers shall give corporate surety, in amounts determined by the church council, for which the premium shall be paid by the congregation.

Section 5.

Trinity's PROMISE

Mission Endowment Fund

**"Trinity's PROMISE"
Mission Endowment Fund**

A. FUND PURPOSE

Christians can give to the work of the church through bequests in wills, assignment of life insurance, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder and other trusts, assignment of certificates of deposit, and transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate); and it is the desire of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tipton, IA (hereafter called the "CHURCH"), to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion to our Lord expressed by the donors and in accord with the policies of this congregation.

A separate fund to be known as Trinity's PROMISE Mission Endowment Fund (hereafter called the "FUND") of the Church has been established to receive these gifts and to enhance the missions and of the CHURCH apart from the general operation of the congregation. No portion of the FUND or income generated by the FUND shall be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation that does not conform to the distribution of principal or income provisions of the FUND.

B. FUND MANAGEMENT

The Trinity's PROMISE Mission Endowment Fund Committee (hereinafter called the "COMMITTEE") is the custodian of the FUND.

1. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The COMMITTEE shall consist of five members, all of whom shall be adult voting members of the CHURCH. The term of each member shall be three (3) years with staggered terms and with no more than two vacancies occurring in any one year. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three (3) year terms. After a lapse of one (1) year a former member may be re-elected. The Senior Pastor, the President, and the Vice President of the Church Council shall be advisory members (without vote) to the COMMITTEE. All other members of the Church Council shall be exempted from membership to the COMMITTEE.

2. The COMMITTEE shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as deemed in the best interest of the FUND.
3. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. When only three (3) members are present, a unanimous vote shall be required to carry any motion or resolution.
4. The COMMITTEE shall elect from its membership a chairperson, recording secretary, and financial secretary. The chairperson, or member designated by the chairperson, shall preside at all COMMITTEE meetings.
5. The recording secretary of the COMMITTEE shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings and supply a copy thereof to each member of the COMMITTEE. The recording secretary shall also supply a copy of the minutes to the Church Council.
6. The financial secretary of the COMMITTEE shall work with the congregation's treasurer in maintaining and coordinating complete and accurate accounts for the FUND and shall sign all necessary documents on behalf of the congregation in furtherance of the purposes of the FUND. The books shall be inspected annually by at least two congregation members who are not members of the COMMITTEE.
7. The COMMITTEE shall report on a quarterly basis to the Church Council and, at each annual or duly called special meeting of the congregation, shall render a full and complete accounting of the administration of the FUND during the preceding year.
8. The COMMITTEE may request other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members and, at the expense of FUND income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interest of the FUND.
9. An Administrative Fund may be created to finance such items as bonding services, office supplies, etc.
10. Members of the COMMITTEE shall not be liable for any losses which may be incurred upon the investments of the assets of the FUND except to the extent such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. No member shall be personally liable as long as he/she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence. Each member shall be liable only for his/her own willful misconduct or omissions, and shall

not be liable for the acts or omissions of any other member. No member shall engage in any self dealing or transactions with the FUND in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the FUND.

11. All assets are to be held in the name of the Trinity's PROMISE Mission Endowment Fund.
12. Decisions to hold, sell, exchange, rent, lease, transfer, convert, invest, reinvest, and in all other respects to manage and control the assets of the FUND, including stocks, bonds, indentures, mortgages, notes, or other securities, as in its judgment and discretion it deems wise and prudent, are to be made by the COMMITTEE.

C. DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME AND/OR PRINCIPAL

1. The dollar amount "X" to be distributed solely at the discretion of the board of directors of the FUND during a given calendar year ("spending year") shall be calculated by the end of January of that year, and shall be equal to five percent (5%) of the simple arithmetic average of the three market values of the FUND for the prior three years. The market value of the FUND for a given year shall be its market value as of December 31 of that year, as determined and reported by the financial secretary of the FUND. Normally, at least 50% of the dollar amount "X" shall be distributed by the end of the spending year. If less than 50% of the dollar amount "X" is distributed by the end of the spending year, COMMITTEE shall report the reasons to the congregation at the subsequent annual meeting of the congregation.
2. Assets of the FUND may only be distributed in accordance with the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act or any subsequent legislation impacting management thereof.
3. Income from the FUND may be distributed annually and at such other times as deemed necessary and/or feasible to accomplish the following purposes, causes and programs:
 - a) To fulfill the written instructions pertaining to a specific contribution made by a contributor to the fund.
 - b) For capital improvements, preventive maintenance, ongoing restoration, major emergency repairs, or a building program of the CHURCH.
 - c) For outreach into the community and synod, including, but not limited to, grants to ELCA seminaries, colleges, or students attending such schools, social service agencies, institutions and agencies to which this congregation relates, and to special programs designed for those persons in our parish area who are in spiritual and/or economic need.
 - d) For missions in this continent and worldwide, including, but not limited to, grants to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for new congregational development in North America, professional leadership, educational ministries, global mission, ecumenism, social ministries, and capital financing.

4. Purposes, causes and programs for support shall be recommended by the COMMITTEE and approved by the Church Council for funding according to the guidelines established by this document.
5. Disbursement of income from the FUND need not occur annually in the event purposes, causes and programs have not been approved by the COMMITTEE sufficient to utilize total income available, or if in the judgment of the COMMITTEE total annual disbursement of income is not recommended.

D. AMENDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME AND/OR PRINCIPAL PROVISIONS SECTION C

Any amendments to Section C, which will change, alter, or amend the Distribution of Income purpose for which the FUND is established, shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present at an annual meeting of the congregation or at a special meeting called specifically for the purpose of amending this resolution.

E. DISPOSITION OR TRANSFER OF THE FUND

In the event the CHURCH ceases to exist through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be in accordance with codicils for dissolution included with the original bequest directives or, if no directives, at the discretion of the Church Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time.

Established January 6, 2016. Revised January 14, 2016. Passed by congregational vote April 10, 2016.

ARTICLE I

Continuing Resolutions

Section 1. In order to fulfill the five functions of the Church as described in the "Statement of Mission" of the congregation, we adopt the following organizational structure.

Section 2. After the annual congregational meeting in January, the Church Council shall appoint as many standing committees as the local and wider concerns of the congregation shall require. Each committee shall be composed of one or more members of the council and, in addition, other persons on the active membership list of the congregation. Although appointed by and responsible to the council, these committees shall be recognized as representative of the interest of, and performing essential services for, the congregation as a whole. The pastor shall have voice and vote in all committees. All actions of committees shall be subject to review by the council.

Section 3. There shall be a Worship Committee. It shall assist the church council in seeing that services in God's house are conducted regularly and in accordance with the liturgy of the ELCA.

It shall oversee the recruitment of organists, choir directors and liturgy assistants, and the training of ushers and acolytes. An Altar Guild shall function under the auspices of this committee and shall care for the chancel and its furnishings.

Section 4. There shall be a Christian Education Committee, in association with the pastor, which shall oversee the conduct and promotion of the Cradle Roll, Sunday Church School, vacation Church School, instruction for First Communion, Confirmation instruction, and adult education classes. It shall seek to introduce the church's periodicals and devotional resources into the homes of the congregation. It shall attempt to bring the call to the ministry of the Gospel and of other full-time church vocations to the attention of qualified youth of the congregation.

Section 5. There shall be an Evangelism Committee. This committee shall endeavor to reach the unchurched of the community and invite them to share in the life of the congregation. It shall assist the pastor in reclaiming inactive members to fuller participation in the church's life. It shall seek to promote Christian fellowship within the congregation.

Section 6. There shall be a Social Ministry Committee. The purpose of this committee shall be to extend Christian compassion and helpfulness to the ill, the aged, the underprivileged, the institutionalized, and in general, to persons in any kind of need. This committee shall further have the duty to study social conditions, primarily in the local community, in order to bring the healing light of Christian truth to bear upon critical problems through thoughtful Christian discussions of facts and issues.

Section 7. There shall be a Finance and Stewardship Committee, of which the financial secretary and treasurer shall be members. It shall prepare a draft budget for the succeeding year, including this congregation's share in support of the ministry of the Synod and ELCA (Benevolence), and shall submit such draft budget to the church council for its action and later presentation at the congregation

This committee shall exercise oversight of all the financial affairs of the congregation to make sure they are being conducted effeciently. It shall also provide for annual audits of the accounts of the treasurer and financial secretary. It shall evoke and promote the expression of Christian stewardship, diffuse knowledge of the congregation's local, national and world-wide ministries, and lead all members to higher levels of proportionate giving for the Lord's work.

Section 8. There shall be a Property Committee. It shall see to the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation, and shall take care that the same is kept in good repair.

Section 9. There shall be a Staff Support Committee. It shall assist the pastor in an on-going evaluation of his/her ministry in the congregation. In addition, this committee shall seek to minister to the pastor, discuss how members of the congregation can engage in team-ministry with the pastor, promote mutual understanding and co-operation between pastor and people (especially in times of tension and strife) and suggest salary guidelines for the pastor.

Section 10. Nurture in God's Word for our congregation consists of Christian Education classes for youth and adults, Communion classes for young children and youth, WELCA Circle Bible Studies, Evening Bible studies and Pastor's information classes for prospective members.

g. There shall be a Human Resources Committee. It shall have oversight of all paid staff, excluding the rostered minister(s). It shall be responsible for hiring and terminating employment, job descriptions, periodic performance reviews, and mediating any disputes among staff or between staff and congregation.