

**BYLAWS OF
SAINT JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF SWEET AIR, MARYLAND**

Chapter 4: Statement of Intent

- C4.04.01 The Congregational Council of this congregation will focus upon Worship, Mission and Discipleship. Committee, standing and special, shall be appointed to serve and support the mission to "Welcome All. Tell the Story. Grow As Disciples."
- C4.04.02 Each committee of the congregation shall be responsible to the Congregational Council and shall therefore, have at least one Council member to serve as liaison. Appointments to the committees shall be made by the President, with assistance of the Vice-President and consent of the Council. While continuity is desirable, appointments shall be made in accordance with the interests and talents of members of the congregation, as well as the aim of maximum representation and participation. The Pastor(s) shall be a non-voting ex officio members of all committees of the congregation.²

Chapter 8: Membership in the Congregation

- C8.01.01 Membership in this congregation shall be granted and terminated in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Constitution.
- C8.05.01 Inactive membership shall be determined by an annual review of the church records by the Pastor(s) and a committee appointed by the Congregational Council. Members shall be considered inactive if they:
1. Have not communed and/or have not made contribution of record during the current or preceding year, and
 2. Have been contacted by the Pastor(s) or other members at the Pastor's direction and have indicated no desire to become active. Upon recommendation of the Pastor and following approval by the Congregation Council (hereinafter referred to as "the Council"), these persons shall be removed from the active membership roll and placed on the inactive roll.

Children, neither of whose parents or guardians are active members of the congregation, may be dropped from the baptized membership of this congregation if they fail to participate in the Christian Education Programs of this congregation during the current of preceding year.

Members who have been dismissed, resigned, or transferred to other congregations without benefit of a Letter of Transfer, shall hereby have lost membership in this congregation and all rights

¹ The May 6, 2018 amendments renumbered the Bylaws to be consistent with the numbering system in the "Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." The first number refers to the constitution chapter; the second number to the section of that chapter; and the third to the bylaw number for that chapter section. In addition, the amendments modified sections: C4.04.01, C4.04.02, C11.01.02, C11.01.03, C12.01.01 and C12.02.01

²See Section C11.01.02 pertaining to the appointment of committee chairs and committees.

thereto. Re-admission shall necessitate approval of the Council by majority vote following petition to the Council by the Pastor(s).

Chapter 9: The Pastor(s)

- C9.01.01 After the congregation has, by a majority of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast, elected a Pastor, a written Call, signed by the President of the Congregation and approved by the Bishop of the Synod, shall be transmitted to the Pastor-elect.
- C9.01.02 By this Call, the Pastor shall be held to teach, reprove and comfort in accordance with the Confession of Faith and the other regulations of the Constitution.
- C9.01.03. In this Call, the congregation shall bind itself, in accordance with the word of God to receive the Pastor-elect as their Pastor and spiritual advisor, to tender to the Pastor Christian respect and to pray for and show all manner of good will.
- C9.05.01 The Pastor(s) shall neither arbitrarily leave nor be arbitrarily dismissed.
- C9.05.02 Since both Pastor(s) and congregation are mutual parties to the Call, the Pastor(s) shall consult with the President, the Council and, if requested, with the congregation assembled before action on any other Call received is taken.
- C9.05.03 If the congregation decides that a change of Pastor(s) is desirable, the matter(s) shall first be referred to the Mutual Ministries Committee who shall advise the Council of their findings at a Council meeting without the Pastor(s) present. If such meeting fails to result in a peaceful solution to the problem and the difficulties persist, the President of the Congregation shall consult with the proper Synod officials who shall advise the council and the congregation. Procedural steps shall be as stated in Chapter 9 of the Constitution.

Chapter 10: Congregational Meetings

- C10.01.01 The Annual Congregational Meeting shall be held as stated in Chapter 10 of the Constitution. It shall be chaired by the President of the Congregation or, in the President's absence, by the Vice-President of the Congregation. If neither the President nor the Vice-President is present, the meeting shall be chaired by the Council Secretary.
- C10.01.02 Meetings of the congregation shall be called in accordance with Chapter 10 of the Constitution. No other procedure(s) shall be approved by the Council.
- C10.02.01 Special Congregational Meetings shall be held as stated in Chapter 10 of the Constitution. The same procedures shall be followed as described for the annual Meetings. It shall be chaired as described in A. above.
- C10.03.01 Notice of all Congregational Meetings must be given by mail and at the worship services on two successive Sundays preceding the meeting date and must include a clear statement of the agenda for that meeting. No other business shall be conducted nor discussed at a Special Congregational Meeting than that which has been published and disseminated as the agenda for that meeting.

- C10.04.01 A quorum shall be necessary in order to conduct all Congregational Meetings. A quorum shall be defined as those interested voting members present at a duly constituted and communicated meeting called by the Council. The presiding officer shall determine, with advice of Council members present, that the quorum present represents a cross-section of the voting members and that all segments are represented.
- C10.07.01 Robert's Rules of Order, most recent edition, shall be the governing guide for all Council Meetings.

Chapter 11: Officers of this Congregation

- C11.01.01 The President shall preside at all meetings and shall have primary authority to sign and execute, separately and/or jointly with the Council Secretary and the Treasurer, all authorized deeds, mortgages, stocks, bonds, contracts, or other legal instruments, in the name of the Church Corporation.
- C11.01.02 As promptly as possible, and before the President's first Council Meeting, the President shall confer with the Vice-President and then appoint the Chairpersons of the Committees within the mission areas of the church. The President and Vice-President shall ensure that Council members are liaisons of all committees described in Section 6 of these bylaws and in the Continuing Resolutions of this congregation. Normally, a chairperson shall serve for no more than three (3) consecutive years as Chairperson of the same Committee.³
- C11.01.03 The President with Council consent shall have the authority to create, organize, reorganize, and dissolve an Ad Hoc committee to perform special and specific tasks. These Ad Hoc committees shall be included in a published organization chart to be communicated to the congregation at the earliest possible time in the new year. The President may also add or subtract members to the Ad Hoc committee(s) as needs dictate.
- C11.01.03 In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall perform all the duties of the President and, when so acting, shall have the same powers as the president. The Vice-President shall carry out any duties and responsibilities delegated by the President.
- C11.01.04 The Council Secretary shall keep accurate and legible minutes of all Council and Congregational meetings. Such records shall be maintained in a permanent file, accessible to all members. The Secretary shall conduct all necessary correspondence on behalf of the Council. The Secretary shall have the authority to join in the execution of legal documents with the President or with the Vice-President as specified above. The Secretary shall perform other such duties delegated by the President or Vice-President.
- C11.01.05 The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Council for one year and may be reappointed for any number of succeeding years. The Treasurer shall have oversight of all deposits to the credit of the congregation. The Treasurer shall ensure that the finances of the congregation are safely invested as authorized by the Council. The Treasurer shall pay all bills promptly, as authorized by the Council, and shall issue a monthly report to the Council of the status of all accounts. The Treasurer may be a financial advisor to the Council and shall participate in Council meetings as a non-voting member. The Treasurer shall list all financial assets and their location semi-annually for information of the Council.

³ See Section C4.04.02 pertaining to committees.

- C11.01.06 The Financial Secretary shall be appointed by the Council for one year and may be reappointed for any number of succeeding years. The Financial Secretary shall report to the Council and shall assist the Treasurer as directed by the Council Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall be the sole custodian of the confidential records of individual and family giving, envelope status, gifts, bequeaths, trusts, and endowments when confidentiality is requested by the giver(s). The Financial Secretary shall prepare an annual report of giving by the congregation, withholding names. The Financial Secretary may be a financial advisor to the Council and may participate in Council meetings as a non-voting member.
- C11.01.07 The officers of the congregation shall follow the order of succession herein in the event of disabling injury or sickness, moving from the area, death, or discipline: Vice-President shall succeed the President if necessary; the Council Secretary shall succeed the Vice-President if necessary; the Council shall then elect a Council member to replace the Secretary.

Chapter 12: Congregational Council

- C12.01.01 The Council shall consist of twelve (12) voting members, at least eighteen (18) years of age, at all times. The Pastor(s), Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be participating but non-voting members at Council meetings.
- C12.01.02 At the first official Council meeting following the fall semi-annual Congregational Meeting, the Council shall elect by secret ballot the following chief officers of the congregation: President, Vice-President, Council Secretary, Treasurer for one year, and Financial Secretary for one year. Their terms of office shall begin immediately.
- C12.02.01 Nominations
1. A candidate for election to the Congregation Council must be a voting member as defined in Chapter 8, except that such voting member shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
 2. The nominating committee for Council vacancies shall consist of the retiring Council members. It shall be the duty of this committee to ascertain the willingness and ability to serve of each candidate. Attempts shall be made to select a list of candidates that exceeds the number of retiring Council members. The Pastor(s) shall take no active role in the ascertainment of the willingness of candidates for vacant church council offices other than as a participant in the meetings of the nominating committee.
 3. Council members are ineligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year after serving a full term on the Council. Those members serving less than three (3) years are eligible for election to a full three year term.
 4. The names of all candidates known at that time shall be announced during the worship services on the two (2) Sundays preceding the meeting. The names shall be announced again at the Congregational Meeting prior to the election.
 5. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the Congregational Meeting, in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition. The presiding officer of the meeting shall determine from the rostrum the ability and willingness of each candidate so nominated to serve on the Council.

- C12.02.02 The members of the Congregation Council shall be elected, by secret ballot if requested by a member of the congregation, at the Annual Congregational Meeting. If secret ballots are used, ballots will be counted by the current members of the Council. Those candidates with the highest number of votes shall be elected.
- C12.03.01 A vacant, unexpired term shall be filled by the Council at a regular or special Council meeting called by the President. First consideration shall be given to the unsuccessful candidates with the highest number of votes. New appointments to fill vacancies shall be communicated to the congregation promptly. These appointments are not subject to congregational vote.
- C12.04.01 All Council members shall provide a Christian example to the other members of the congregation by regular attendance at worship services, by hearing and doing God's work, by frequently partaking of The Lord's Supper, and by supporting the financial needs of the congregation.
- C12.04.02 It shall be the particular responsibility of the Council members to enhance the spiritual welfare of the congregation. They shall ensure that only such Pastor(s) are admitted to the pulpit of St. John's as the Constitution prescribes; that the doctrines preached and taught are in accordance with God's Word and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and that the literature used in the instruction of the young is Christian and Lutheran. Council members shall assist the Pastor(s) if requested to visit the sick, distressed, or bereaved. They shall be responsible for the management of financial and legal obligations of the congregation, as well as the real properties thereof.
- C12.05.01 The Pastor(s)' performance and salary shall be studied annually by the Mutual Ministries Committee and reported to the Council. The Pastor(s) salary and benefits may be changed annually, according to the performance of Pastoral duties and obligations, by means of line items in the annual budget presented to the congregation assembled at the Annual Congregational Meeting. Financial adjustments may also be affected during the year by a Special Congregational Meeting called by the President.