

Revised: (January 23, 2011)
Ratified: (January 22, 2012)
Effective Date: (February 1, 2012)

Edited 12-05-10

Original Adoption Date 1-24-2010

CONSTITUTION
of
Faith Lutheran Church of Little Falls
P.O. Box 466
Little Falls, MN 56345

Table of Contents

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1. PREAMBLE	2
2. NAME	2
3. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	2
4. CONFESSION OF FAITH	3
5. CONGREGATION MEMBERS	3
6. MEDIATION	4
7. CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL	4
8. OFFICERS	4
9. CONGREGATIONAL TEAMS	5
10. THE PASTOR	5
11. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS	6
12. BY-LAWS	7
13. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS	7
14. AMENDMENTS	7
15. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION	7

CONSTITUTION

of

Faith Lutheran Church of Little Falls

P.O. Box 466

Little Falls, MN 56345

1.0 PREAMBLE

C 1.01 In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen. 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.

C 1.02 All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of the Congregation are to be carried out under His rule and authority.

C 1.03 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. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local Congregations gathered for worship and Christian service.

2.0 NAME

C 2.01 The name of this Congregation shall be: Faith Lutheran Church of Little Falls, Minnesota.

3.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

C 3.01 To participate in God's mission, the 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 the Spirit gives.

4.0 CONFESSION OF FAITH

C 4.01 We believe, teach, and confess the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C 4.02 We believe, teach, and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

C 4.03 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.

C 4.04 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 4.05 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. We believe, teach, and accept the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as a whole and in all their parts, are the divinely-inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.

C 4.06 We accept the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the scriptural faith we believe, teach and confess.

C 4.07 We believe, teach and accept the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel.

C 4.08 We believe, teach and accept the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely the Apology of the Augsburg Confession.

C 4.09 We believe, teach and confess 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.

C 4.10 We affirm the priesthood of all believers, and commit ourselves to equipping and supporting all members of the Congregation for ministry within and outside of this household of faith.

5.0 CONGREGATION MEMBERS

C 5.01 Members of the Congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the Congregation at the time that this Constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in this church through their regular participation in worship and the sacrament of Holy Communion, and in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and its By-Laws.

C 5.02 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 who have received Holy Communion and made a contribution of record to this Congregation and/or given some other evidence of Christian fellowship within the preceding 12 months.

C 5.03 All adult members shall be in full accord with the Congregation's Confession of Faith contained herein.

C 5.04 Termination of membership shall be for any of the following:

- a. death
- b. resignation
- c. transfer or release
- d. disciplinary action as regulated by the By-Laws

6.0 MEDIATION

C 6.01 Mediation to resolve issues may be used as defined in the bylaws.

7.0 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

C 7.01 The voting membership of the Congregational Council shall consist of the Lead Pastor and not more than twelve members of the Congregation.

C 7.02 Any voting member of the Congregation may be elected, subject to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office.

C 7.03 The members of the Congregational Council except the Lead Pastor shall be elected by written ballot to serve for three years or until their successors are elected. Such elected members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Members of the Congregational Council who have served two full consecutive terms shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of three (3) years.

C 7.04 Should a member's place on the Congregational Council be declared vacant, the Congregational Council shall appoint, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. At the next annual meeting, the Congregation shall elect a member to fill the remaining unexpired term.

C 7.05 The terms, conditions, obligation and authority of the Congregational Council shall be as more fully set forth in the By-Laws of this Congregation.

8.0 OFFICERS

C 8.01 The officers of this Congregation shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

C 8.02 Duties of the officers shall be specified in the By-Laws.

C 8.03 The officers shall be voting members of the Congregation.

C 8.04 The Congregational Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the Congregation. The officers shall serve for time in office as designated in the By-Laws.

C 8.05 No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.

9.0 CONGREGATIONAL TEAMS

C 9.01 Congregational Teams may be formed as defined in the bylaws. The Congregational Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each team, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.

10.0 THE PASTOR

C 10.01 The Congregation may issue a letter of call to a Pastor by at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose.

C 10.02 All pastoral candidates shall have graduated from a Lutheran seminary or other recognized theological institution.

C 10.03 The Pastor shall exhibit true and established Christian character and be qualified to preach and teach the Word of God as described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; and Titus 1:5-9. The Pastor must be in full accord with the Congregation's Confession of Faith and must be willing to perform all duties in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Congregation.

The specific duties of the Pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the Pastor shall be included in the letter of call.

C 10.04 Every ordained minister of the Congregation shall:

- a. Preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship, and provide Pastoral care;
- b. Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
- c. Supervise all staff and be an advisor to organizations of the Congregation;
- d. Install regularly elected members of the Congregational Council;
- e. In conjunction with the Congregational Council, administer discipline;
- f. Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;

C 10.05 The call of the Congregation, when accepted by a Pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the Pastor, shall be terminated only for the following reasons:

- a. Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
- b. Resignation of the Pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, thirty (30) days after the date on which it was submitted;
- c. Inability to conduct the Pastoral office effectively in the Congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the Pastor;
- d. The physical or mental incapacity of the Pastor, in which case competent medical testimony shall be obtained;
- e. Disqualification of the Pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;

f. The dissolution of the Congregation

C 10.06 In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the Congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard in a timely manner, after which the Congregational Council shall recommend a course of action to the Pastor and the Congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken. If either party disagrees, the Council may request that representatives from Affiliated Organizations participate in mediation to resolve outstanding issues. If such mediation is unsuccessful, the Congregation may dismiss the Pastor by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting members present at a specially called meeting.

C 10.07 At a time of Pastoral vacancy, the Congregational Council may appoint an interim Pastor.

C 10.08 During the period of service, an interim Pastor shall have the rights and duties in the Congregation of a regularly called Pastor. The interim Pastor and any other ordained Pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a Pastor.

C 10.09 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.

C 10.10 When a Pastor is called to serve 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 and the Congregational Council. The document may be revised through a similar consultation, as required.

C 10.11 The Congregation may call a Pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions specified above.

C 10.12 The Pastor shall be responsible for maintaining accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the Congregation. The Pastor shall be a member of this Congregation.

11.0 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

C 11.01 The annual meeting of the Congregation shall be held at a time specified in the By-Laws.

12.0 BY-LAWS

C 12.01 The Congregation may adopt By-Laws. No By-Law may conflict with this Constitution.

C 12.02 By-Laws may be adopted or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of a quorum present at any legally called meeting of this Congregation. The effective date shall be included in the resolution and noted in the By-Laws.

C 12.03 Amendments to the By-Laws may be proposed by at least ten percent (10%) of the voting members or by the Congregational Council. Proposed Amendment(s) must be filed in writing with the Congregational Council sixty (60) days before normal consideration by this Congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregational Council shall notify the members of the proposed Amendment(s) with the Council's recommendations at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting.

C 12.04 Proposed Amendment(s) to the By-Laws shall have the effective date included in the Resolution and noted in the By-Laws.

13.0 CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C 13.01 The Congregational Council may enact Continuing Resolutions describing the function of the various teams or organizations of this Congregation.

C 13.02 Continuing Resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all voting members of the Congregational Council.

14.0 AMENDMENTS

C 14.01 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by at least ten percent (10%) of the voting members or by the Congregational Council. Proposed Amendment(s) must be filed in writing with the Congregational Council sixty (60) days before normal consideration by this Congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregational Council shall notify the members of the proposed Amendment(s) with the Council's recommendations at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting.

C 14.02 A proposed Amendment(s) to this Constitution shall:

- a. Be approved at a properly called meeting according to this Constitution by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting;
- b. Be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting;
- c. Have the effective date included in the Resolution and noted in the Constitution.

15.0 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION

C 15.01 The property of Faith Lutheran Church of Little Falls, Minnesota belongs to the members of this Congregation. Real (real estate) property shall be acquired and managed by the Congregational Council as provided in the By-Laws.

C 15.02 Upon dissolution of Faith Lutheran Church of Little Falls, Minnesota the Congregational Council shall sell all properties, retire all debts and cause any remaining assets to be distributed to one or more organizations with purposes similar to Faith Lutheran Church of Little Falls, Minnesota. No member shall individually or collectively profit from the dissolution of this Congregation.