



*Responding to God's Grace in Christ,  
we welcome all people, prepare  
disciples, and live faithfully through  
worship, spiritual growth, and action.*

**ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH, WINTERSET, IOWA**

**CONGREGATION COUNCIL CHARTER**

**AUTHORITY**

The Congregation Council, established in accordance with the Constitution of St. Paul Lutheran Church, is elected by the Congregation (C5.03.i) and carries out its duties as described in Chapter 12.

**PURPOSE**

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. (C12.04)

**COMPOSITION**

The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of not more than nine or fewer than seven members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. (Constitution Chapter 12.01)

The pastor shall be an ex officio non-voting member of the Congregation Council. (C12.01)

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. (12.01)

The elected members of the Congregation Council 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. (12.02)

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. (12.03)

## Officers

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. (C11.02)

The Treasurer shall annually be appointed by the Congregation Council and shall serve at the will of the Congregation Council. (C11.02)

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. (C11.03)

## **MEETINGS**

The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and may be called 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. (C 12.11)

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 but excluding the Treasurer, 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. (C12.12)

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Officers The responsibilities of the officers shall include the following (C11.01):

The President shall preside over meetings of the Congregation Council and of the congregation unless it is decided differently in the meeting. The President shall act as liaison between the Congregation and the Pastor.

The Vice-President shall preside over the meetings of the Congregation Council in the absence of the President unless it is decided differently in the meeting.

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all Congregation Council meetings and Congregation Meetings and shall preserve its archives.

The Treasurer shall be a custodian of all funds of this congregation and shall disburse all such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation or the Congregation Council. He/she shall present an audited report at a Congregation Meeting at least annually and such other reports to the Congregation Council as may be required. The Treasurer shall include accounts from all committees and organizations handling funds in his/her report at each annual and semi-annual meeting.

Congregational Council The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following (C12.04):

- 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 organization 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.

The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation. (C12.05)

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors 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 \$10,000.00 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 \$10,000 more than 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 church-wide 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.

The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out. (C12.06)

Pursuant to \*C4.04., the organizational structure for this congregation shall consist of the Congregation Council providing leadership with committees, task forces, and other organizational groups performing

their functions and reporting to the Congregation Council. A continuing resolution describing the structure and responsibilities for each committee, task force, and other organizational group shall be prepared by the Congregation Council and listed here below. (C12.06.01)

The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster. (C12.07)

The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the development of personnel policy including the role of pastoral leadership in the supervision of paid staff and unpaid lay ministries. (C12.08)

The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting. (C12.09)

### **CHARTER REVIEW**

This Charter shall be reviewed by the Congregation Council Governance subcommittee by October 1, and the Committee leader will provide feedback and suggested revisions to the Congregation Council for Council consideration. Authority for all charters resides with the Congregation Council.