



GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONS

Constitution and Bylaws

LCMS Kansas District

April 23, 2024

I. Introduction

These guidelines are designed to be used by congregations within the Kansas District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to assist them in updating their existing Constitutions and Bylaws. As always, if you have any questions during your work, please contact the Secretary of the Kansas District who will assist you in your work.

II. Rational

Why do we need to be concerned about having an updated Constitution and Bylaws? The answer comes from the Handbook of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which reads:

2.4 Continued Eligibility of Congregations.

- 2.4.1 A congregation desiring to retain membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall continue to have a constitution and bylaws approved by the Synod.
- (a) A member congregation which desires to revise its constitution and/or bylaws shall, **as a condition of continued eligibility as a member of the Synod,** submit a proposed revised constitution and/or revised bylaws to the district president. (*emphasis added*)

NOTE: As a District we encourage congregations to keep their Constitution and Bylaws up to date, since changes in the law or good practice may assist congregations to avoid possible pitfalls in governance.

III. Getting Started

1. The congregation should appoint a committee to review/revise your existing Constitution and Bylaws.
2. Once this committee has completed the review/update, and **BEFORE** final approval by the congregation, send an electronic copy to the Kansas District President. He will then forward this copy to the District Constitution and Bylaw Review Committee.
3. Send your documents in **WORD format** and **not** in PDF format. A document in WORD format allows the District Committee to make corrections and suggestions in text.
4. Send your documents in **single page format** and **not** in booklet form. Once again this makes it easier for the District Committee to make corrections and suggestions using the “Track Changes” and “Comments” functions.

IV. Grammar

1. Do not use the term “Synodical.” Use the term “the Synod.”
2. The proper name for the Synod is: “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” using the “em” or long dash between Church and Missouri. You may also copy and paste the above name into your document. The proper way to abbreviate the title is: “LCMS” not “LC-MS.”
3. Please be consistent in using capital letters or lower-case letters for the words “Constitution” and “Bylaws.” Use either capital letter ‘C’ or capital letter ‘B,’ or use lower-case letters throughout the document.
4. Consider using the decimal and parenthetical numbering system as used in the Synod’s Handbook.

V. Content

1. Bear in mind that congregation Constitutions and Bylaws may go beyond the Synod’s Constitution and Bylaws, **but they must never contradict them.**
2. According to the document *Guidelines for Constitution and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations* November 2012, Section II. **FORMAT OF THESE GUIDELINES** part D, “*brief but adequate*” should be the watchword when congregations develop or amend their constitutions and bylaws.”

VI. Process

1. Appoint a committee in your congregation to work through your current Constitution and Bylaws. Make sure you update them according to any changes made throughout the years by the congregation.
2. Submit your revised Constitution and Bylaws to the Kansas District President who will then send them to the District Secretary, who in turn will submit them to the Constitution Committee.
3. The Committee will review your documents to make sure they are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures, the Confessions, and the practice of the Synod. The Committee will work on your documents in the order in which they are received. If you have any questions about the estimated timeline, email the District Secretary (secretary@kslcms.org) to inquire when your documents are likely to be reviewed.
4. Once the Committee reviews your documents, they will be returned to you with comments, suggestions, and necessary corrections.
5. Have your congregation committee review this document. As you do so, please feel free to contact the District Secretary for any questions or concerns you may have.
6. Resubmit a clean copy of your document to the Constitution Committee for further review.
7. Once the Constitution Committee accepts your documents, they will be forwarded to the Kansas District Board of Directors for approval.

8. Upon approval of your documents, the congregation committee can bring them to your Voters' Assembly for adoption. Any adoption of a revised Constitution and Bylaws prior to approval of the Board of Directors is null and void.
9. **This last step is vital.** Upon voters' adoption of your approved Constitution and Bylaws, a clean, dated copy of your new document is to be sent to the Kansas District Secretary for inclusion in the District's files.

VII. Operations Manual

Because any change to your Constitution and Bylaws must be reviewed by the District Committee, your congregation may wish to consider developing an operations manual that lists the detailed work of each officer, board, and committee. The manner of election, terms of office, and other important legal details could remain in the Bylaws. This way, if duties change or are updated, they can be changed within the operations manual by the voters, and it saves the congregation another review of their Constitution and Bylaws by the District Committee.

GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONS

Constitution

NOTE: The first three articles of the Constitution need to appear in the order listed below. After that, the articles may appear in any order you choose. The italicized quotes are from the LCMS Handbook, Synod Convention resolutions, or the LCMS's own Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws. Some of these are on the District website, but they can also be provided upon request. Where noted, some are our own suggestions.

ARTICLE I. Name

State the name of your congregation with the following provisions:

1. Do not include the actual address of the congregation since that may change.
2. Be sure the name used in the documents is the same as the charter name of the congregation.
3. Be sure the name "Lutheran" appears in the document as required by the 1995 Synod Convention, Resolution 3-13A, which states, "*all congregations and mission stations in our Synod boldly profess in their official title and/or name that they are 'Lutheran.'*"

ARTICLE II. Mission Statement

"In the Constitution of a Christian congregation it is desirable to state the mission or purpose for which it exists. Congregations are encouraged to develop their own special mission statement to fit their specific ministry." (Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 2.0)

The following example is provided by the Synod Guidelines:

“The purpose of the congregation shall be to give honor and glory to the Triune God, to carry out His will, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world, to nurture the faith of its members, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand to human need, and to achieve its objectives by the preaching the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all its members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.”

ARTICLE III. Confessional Standard

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod requires that its member congregations accept the confessional standard of the Synod. It is recommended that Article II of the Synod’s Constitution be adapted for inclusion in this section. A congregation’s confessional standard cannot go beyond that of the Synod.” (Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 3.0)

The following statement must appear in your congregation Constitution:

“This congregation accepts without reservation the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice. This congregation also accepts without reservation all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.” (2023 LCMS Handbook, page 11)

ARTICLE IV. Church Services and Christian Education

According to the Synod Handbook, Article IV.4 one of the requirements of membership is that the congregation pledges itself to the *“exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks, and catechisms in church and school.”* The congregation should include a statement to this effect in its constitution.

The following is an example only to help the congregation formulate its own statement:

In all of our worship services, including weddings and funerals, only such hymnals, hymns, and order of service shall be used as are in agreement with the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. For all official acts, only such forms shall be used as are in agreement

with the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions as based upon and/or printed in the Lutheran Agenda.

In Sunday School, Confirmation Classes, Midweek Classes, Vacation Bible School, and in all other religious instruction, only such materials shall be used as are in harmony with the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions.

ARTICLE V. Synod Membership

From the Guidelines for Constitution and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 4.0:

“Although not essential, since membership in the Synod is not determined by a statement in a congregation’s Constitution, congregations may wish to include mention of their membership in the Synod. If a congregation wishes to include mention of membership in the Synod the following may be used:

This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the congregation’s confessional standards as set forth in this Constitution.”

ARTICLE VI. Membership

Synod congregations often distinguish between three types of membership: Baptized, Communicant, and Voting.

The Constitution and Bylaws Review Committee offers the following wording:

A. Baptized membership. Baptized members are those who:

- 1. Are baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;*
- 2. Are under the spiritual care of this congregation, including the children who have not yet been confirmed; and*
- 3. Are received into membership through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through transfer of membership, or with the consent of one or both parents or guardians if children have been baptized in another Christian congregation.*

B. Communicant membership. Communicant members are those who:

- 1. Are baptized with water in the name of the Triune God;*
- 2. Unconditionally accept Article III of this Constitution;*
- 3. Are familiar with Luther’s Small Catechism and declare their acceptance thereof;*
- 4. Do not despise nor neglect the Means of Grace;*
- 5. Do not live in the manifest works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21) but lead Christian lives;*

6. *Permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred; and*
7. *Are not members of any lodge or any other ungodly society.*

C. Voting membership. Voting members are those who:

Here the congregation needs to fill in its requirement for voting membership. There is one special consideration according to Synod Guidelines: “[C]are should be taken that the age at which an individual may hold voting membership conforms to any requirement of state law. Many congregations restrict voting membership to persons who have reached the age of legal majority. This is especially important when decisions involving contracts and other legal matters are made.”

D. Guest members.

Some congregations also include a fourth category: “Guest Members.” 1989 Resolution 5-19 encourages such a category for congregations with many seasonal members “*which could include such basic rights and privileges as reception of the sacraments, pastoral care, congregational concern, use of their, time, talents, and treasures in the service of the Lord and attendance and participation in Voters’ Assemblies as advisory or associate members.*” (1989 Convention Proceedings, page 140. Synod Guidelines.)

ARTICLE VII. Removal from Membership

Membership in this congregation shall be ended as follows:

Here the congregation needs to state the means by which membership comes to an end, including policies on transfer of membership to a sister congregation within the LCMS, release of membership, whereabouts unknown, moving without giving a new address, excommunication, self-exclusion, etc.

It is advisable to avoid requiring a unanimous vote, especially in the area of excommunication, since one “no” vote can derail the entire process. A 2/3, 3/4, or even a 7/8 affirmative vote is acceptable.

The congregation should also state their policy for reinstatement of those removed. Here is a sample statement on self-exclusion:

Any member who absences himself/herself from worship or reception of Holy Communion for a period of one (1) year without just and reasonable cause shall be contacted by the Elders and in brotherly love encouraged to return to worship and regular reception of the Sacrament. If the individual does not return to worship and regular reception of the Sacrament after proper admonition by the Church Elders a motion for release of membership by self-

exclusion shall be presented by the Church Elders to the Voters' Assembly. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote shall be required to recognize self-exclusion. An individual who has been released due to self-exclusion may request to have their membership reinstated. Such request must be in writing to the Church Elders who shall present such request to the Voters' Assembly. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote shall be required to reinstate a person's membership.

ARTICLE VIII. Calling of Ordained and Commissioned Ministers

Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws for Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitution, 6.0 sets the standards for calling ordained and commissioned ministers. Based upon this information the Constitution and Bylaw Review Committee suggests the following wording adapted from the Guidelines:

The right of calling ordained and commissioned ministers shall be vested in the congregation through the Voters' Assembly and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual. The right to call commissioned ministers also belongs to the congregation and ordinarily shall not be delegated to a smaller body and never to an individual.

Only such men shall be called as pastor, and only such men and women shall be called as commissioned ministers who accept all the books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, who are in full agreement with the Confessional Standard (Constitution Article III), and who have the qualifications for such calls according to the standards and teachings of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The pastor in the call extended to him and accepted by him pledges himself to this Confessional Standard. The commissioned minister in the call extended to him/her and accepted by him/her pledges himself/herself to this confessional standard.

Any ordained or commissioned minister may be removed from office in Christian and lawful order by a two-thirds (2/3) majority ballot vote of the Voters' Assembly for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of office, or the prolonged inability to perform those duties.

Some sources also add as a reason for removal from office the reason of incompetence. As a Constitution Committee we do not recommend the use of that reason, since proving it is very subjective.

ARTICLE IX. Authority of and within the Congregation

Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws for Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 7.0 says, *"At times there is a lack of clarity in a congregation regarding the extent of the authority within the congregation to make certain decisions. It is therefore wise to include an article that will obviate this difficulty."*

The following is one possible model:

The Voters' Assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs.

1. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation or related directly to the congregation shall be subject to the overall authority and general oversight of the Voters' Assembly.
2. All matters before the Voters' Assembly shall be decided by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by this Constitution or Bylaws. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only on the basis of the Word of God.
3. A decision by the Voters' Assembly may be appealed. The decision by the voters on an appeal is final.

ARTICLE X. Meetings

Constitutions of congregations should establish how the meetings of the Voters' Assembly or governing entities will be called, how special meetings will be announced, how emergency meetings will be announced, and how a quorum will be determined." (Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 8.0)

ARTICLE XI. Officers, Boards, and Committees

Here the congregation will state the officers of the congregation, such as president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, etc., and the boards and committees of the congregation, such as Board of Elders, Board of Stewardship, Nominating Committee, etc.

NOTE: The State of Kansas requires that a not for profit, non-stock corporation may have such officers with such titles as are specified in the Bylaws or in a resolution of the Board of Directors which is not inconsistent with the Bylaws. K.S.A. 17-6302(a). Typically, a president, secretary and treasurer are elected.

This section should state when elections are held, how appointments are made, and the terms of office of each officer, board, and committee member.

Care should be taken that the age at which individuals may hold office conforms to any requirements of Kansas Law. Kansas Law requires that an individual who signs legal documents must be the age of legal majority.

The congregation needs to state who may serve in each office, men or women.

NOTE: "In accordance with the teachings of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod women are not to be placed in offices which call upon them to carry out the specific functions of the pastoral office." (Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 9.0; this also reflects 2016 Synod Resolution 5-14.) This would

include women serving as Elders of a congregation, or on committees that are engaged in the duties relating to the specific functions of the pastoral office. See also our suggestions under Bylaws II below.

ARTICLE XII: Removal from Office

The Review Committee recommends the following wording:

Any officer of the congregation, board member, or committee member may be removed from office in Christian and lawful order by a two-thirds (2/3) majority ballot vote of the Voters' Assembly for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of office, or the prolonged inability to perform those duties.

ARTICLE XIII: Division and Closure

The Constitution and Bylaw Review Committee recommends the following wording as based upon the laws of the State of Kansas and the Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 10.0.

This also incorporates some of our suggestions from past experience with closure of congregations:

If a division occurs within this congregation, may Almighty God prevent this from ever happening, the advice of the District President shall be sought. If the division persists, then the property of this congregation and all rights and benefits associated with it shall remain with those members who faithfully adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of this Constitution.

In the event that the congregation considers closing, the congregation shall notify the District President and the Circuit Visitor for proper guidelines, since closure involves the disposal of property, payment of debts, care for a congregation's cemetery, and notification of the State of Kansas.

In the event the congregation chooses to dissolve, it shall pass a resolution including final dates, a plan for payment of all debts and just claims against the congregation, dispersal of all properties, and a local designee to carry out the congregation's will. Remaining funds shall be disbursed by the congregation, with special consideration being given to the mission and ministry of the LCMS Kansas District.

ARTICLE XIV: Amendments to the Constitution

According to Synod Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws for Lutheran Congregations, Section III. Guidelines for Constitutions, 11.0, a device called an "unalterable article" has been used in the past, but legally there are no unalterable articles. There can be, however, articles in congregations' constitutions that are more difficult to amend. Congregations may therefore wish to provide for two separate procedures for amending.

In addition, there must be a paragraph in this section that reflects this very process of review, that as a condition of remaining in the LCMS, these documents will be submitted for review to the District for approval by the Board of Directors.

Examples:

Amendments to the provisions of this constitution not identified in the following paragraph shall be submitted in writing at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly and announced to the congregation by public posting and/or mail to all communicant members prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the voters present shall be required for adoption.

Amendments to Articles _____ (those previously listed as unalterable) shall not destroy their essential meaning. Amendments shall be submitted in writing at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly and made public to the congregation by public posting and/or by mail to all communicant members. Notice of the discussion of such amendments shall be given prior to two regular Voters' Assemblies when the proposed action will be discussed. Notice that action will be taken on proposed amendments shall be provided to all voting members prior to the meeting when a vote will be taken. The date of approval shall be referenced in any amendment adopted. A three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of the voters present shall be required for adoption.

The revised Constitution shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the Kansas District for review by the District's Constitution and Bylaw Committee, and favorable action by the District's Board of Directors before being implemented by the congregation.

GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONS

Bylaws

ARTICLE I: Guidelines for Calling Ordained and Commissioned Ministers

The process of calling ministers is an important decision for every congregation and ought to take place with careful consideration. The Constitution Committee suggests the below wording for the call process:

At the time of a Pastoral vacancy, the Chairman of the congregation shall contact the Circuit Visitor who serves as a representative of the District President's office. His role is to advise and help the congregation in all call matters. The District President, or another District official, along with the Circuit Visitor will meet with the congregation to discuss the procedure for beginning the call process, which includes the nomination of candidates, filling the vacancy, and issuing a call...

The Call Committee shall be (fill in yourself)_____.

The Call Committee will review all profiles of potential candidates sent to it by the District President. After asking the Lord for guidance in prayer the Call Committee shall then select those candidates they feel will best fit the needs of the congregation. Interviews may be conducted using this list of candidates. Any interview shall follow the pre-call interview guidelines established by the Synod.

At a regular or special meeting of the Voters' Assembly the Call Committee shall recommend their list of candidates to the Voters. Any Voter is entitled to amend the list of candidates, provided the nominee appears on the list of candidates provided by the District President. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present shall be required to amend the call list. The final call list shall then be approved by the Voters' Assembly. The Voters shall then cast ballots until one candidate is elected by a simple majority vote. That candidate shall receive the Divine Call. It shall be the duty of the President of the Congregation to notify the candidate promptly in whatever manner the Voters' Assembly has decided.

When the Voters' Assembly decides to call a graduate from one of our Synod's seminaries, the placement of such candidate will be handled by the LCMS Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments.

When calling an ordained minister as a multi-congregation parish, the procedures outlined in the parish agreement shall be followed.

If your congregation does not have any Commissioned Ministers (teachers, DCEs, etc.) and is not considering calling any, this next section can be omitted. If your congregation does call Commissioned Ministers, consider this wording:

At the time of a vacancy for a Commissioned Minister the Chairman of the Congregation shall contact the Circuit Visitor to inform him of the vacancy. The Chairman of the Congregation

will contact the appropriate District Official to schedule a meeting to discuss the procedures for calling a Commissioned Minister.

The Call Committee shall be (fill in yourself)_____.

After asking the Lord for guidance in prayer the Call Committee will review all profiles of potential candidates sent to it by the District Official. The Call Committee shall then select those candidates they feel will best fit the needs of (the congregation. Phone interviews may be conducted using the list of candidates.

At a regular or special meeting of the Voters' Assembly the Call Committee shall recommend their list of candidates to the Voters' Assembly. Any Voter in attendance is entitled to amend the list of candidates provided the nominee appears on the list of candidates provided by the District Official. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present shall be required to amend the call list. The final call list shall then be approved by the Voters' Assembly. The voters shall then cast ballots until one candidate is elected by a simple majority vote. The candidate shall receive the Divine Call. It shall be the duty of the Chairman of the Congregation to notify the candidate promptly in whatever manner the Voters Assembly has decided.

As a matter of courtesy, the calling body shall keep the Circuit Visitor informed during this process.

If a graduate from one of our Synod's universities (or seminaries in the calling of a Deaconess) is to be called, the placement of such candidate will be handled by the university or seminary acting as the Board of Assignments. The congregation is to contact the university for proper calling procedures.

When calling a commissioned minister as part of a school association, the calling procedures outlined in the association agreement shall be followed.

ARTICLE II: Officers, Boards, and Committees

Ex-officio: The term means "as a result of one's status or position." Very often the pastor and the president of the congregation are listed as an ex-officio member of boards and committees. Please state if the individual with ex-officio status has the right to vote or not. If not, use the term "Advisory" to indicate that.

In this section the congregation needs to state who may serve as officers, or on boards and committees (male or female). The District Constitution and Bylaw Review Committee add the following requirements:

1. A woman president and/or vice-president who is stated to be an "ex-officio" member of all boards and committees may serve in that capacity **except** for the Board of Elders. In accordance with the teaching of Scriptures **only males** may serve on the Board of Elders.
2. In congregations where a Spiritual Care Team is in place the following statement must be included: "*In accordance with the teaching of Scriptures, only **male** members of the*

Spiritual Care Team shall exercise any of the functions that are distinctive to the public exercise of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments.”

When identifying officers, board members, or committee members in the Bylaws all that needs to be stated is a brief description of their responsibilities. Details of the position may be placed in an operations manual. This allows the congregation to make changes in responsibilities without needing their documents reviewed and approved again.

ARTICLE III. Church Council/Board of Directors

In this section the congregation is to state the composition of the Church Council/Board of Directors, including the meeting schedule, who serves as President and Secretary of the Church Council/Board of Directors, principal duty of the Church Council/Board of Directors, and who may call special meetings of the Church Council/Board of Directors.

This section should include the involvement of the pastor who may be listed as an ex-officio member. Please state if, as an ex-officio member, the pastor has the right to vote.

ARTICLE IV. Vacancy in Office

In this section the congregation should state how a vacancy in any office is filled.

ARTICLE V. Rules of Order

The Constitution Committee suggests the following wording:

All meetings of this congregation and its boards and committees shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, unless noted otherwise by the Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI. Order of Business

Here the congregation needs to list the order of business used in all meetings.

ARTICLE VII. Marriage Policy

If the congregation desires it may describe its marriage policy, especially concerning gay/homosexual unions.

The Synod has established this policy:

The marriage policy of _____, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the Synod's beliefs on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). The official position of The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod, as set

forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 (“To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions”), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator’s design (Rom. 1:26-27). These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and “marriage.” Our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

ARTICLE VIII. Congregation Endowment Fund

If the congregation has an Endowment Fund, a brief description of that fund should be listed in the Bylaws. The actual wording of the Endowment Fund may be placed in an operations manual or as an appendix to the Constitution and Bylaws. Make sure all endowment funds have passed legal review.

ARTICLE IX. Cemetery Burial Rights

If the congregation has its own cemetery, a brief description of the burial rights should be listed in the Bylaws. The actual wording of the burial rights may be placed in an operations manual or as an appendix to the Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE X. School Association

If a school association is incorporated and has its own corporate documents, and the congregation is a member of the corporation and probably provides one or more board members, mention of this membership should be included in the congregation’s Bylaws, including its role in the association, how its representatives are elected/appointed, etc. The actual wording of the school association may be placed in an operations manual or as an appendix to the Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE XI. Amendments to the Bylaws

Here the congregation needs to state the procedure used in amending the Bylaws. The final statement shall read:

The revised Bylaws shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the Kansas District for review by the District’s Constitution and Bylaw Committee, and favorable action by the District’s Board of Directors, before being implemented by the congregation.