

CONSTITUTION
FOR
RESURRECTION LUTHERAN CHURCH
(Adopted January 15, 2012)

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

- 1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Resurrection Lutheran Church.
- 1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and any accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Resurrection Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- 1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

This congregation incorporates Article 2 of the constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (the "NALC"), confessing:

- 2.01. The Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- 2.02. 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 the Holy Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them the Holy Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- 2.03. 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, "according to which all doctrines should and must be judged." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Part I)

- 2.04. The Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church.
- 2.05. 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.
- 2.06. 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.
- 2.07. 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

- 3.01. The Church is the universal assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. (Augsburg Confession VII)
- 3.02. 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.
- 3.03. 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.
- 3.04. This congregation exercises ministry within the mission of the NALC. This congregation embodies the Church in its community and, for the sake of mission, lives in cooperative partnership with other congregations and within the other structures of the NALC. This congregation shall share responsibility for the decision-making processes of the NALC.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- 4.01. The hearers of the Gospel are a people, called and sent by God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be a community of faith, hope and love, who witness to Christ and His coming Kingdom before all the world.
- 4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Give honor and glory to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, worshipping Him in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, obedience and service.
 - b. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by proclaiming to all the world the Gospel of justification by grace through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in Holy Scripture and in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions,
 - c. Preserve and transmit the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - d. Foster Christian fellowship and love, and extend a helping hand to humans in need.
 - e. Manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, and join with other Christians in prayer and action.

f. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, and to develop a sense of Christian vocation in daily life.

4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is rightly preached and the sacraments are rightly 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. Encourage its members to provide appropriate financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the NALC.
- h. Foster and participate in relationships with other congregations and structures of the NALC.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relations consistent with NALC policy.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregational Meeting.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

6.01. This congregation is a member of the NALC or any successor and is subject to the procedures of the NALC.

6.02. This congregation subscribes to the constitution of the NALC and will act in accordance with it.

6.03. This congregation will conduct its ministry in a manner consistent with its membership in the NALC:

- a. This congregation is responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its participation in the life and mission of the NALC, including the prayerful consideration of appropriate financial support.
- c. This congregation shall call only pastors who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.
- d. This congregation shall appoint only commissioned lay leaders who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.

6.04. Affiliation with the NALC may be terminated as follows:

- a. This congregation dissolves.
- b. This congregation ceases to exist.

- c. This congregation is removed from membership in the NALC according to the procedures for discipline of the NALC.
- d. This congregation, at a legally called meeting, approves by at least a two-thirds majority of those present and voting a resolution directing that this congregation withdraw from the NALC. If this congregation adopts a resolution withdrawing from the NALC, all provisions of this constitution binding this congregation to the NALC shall be immediately ineffective. The congregation shall promptly deliver a copy of the withdrawal resolution to the NALC General Secretary.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- 7.01. This congregation is an independent legal entity with rights to purchase, hold, and convey real and personal property in accord with applicable law. The NALC shall have no right to or interest in the property of this congregation unless this congregation expressly conveys such a right or interest to the NALC. If this congregation dissolves, its property shall be distributed in accord with applicable law and with the congregation's governing documents.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- 8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons (a) who are on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted or who are admitted thereafter, and (b) who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- 8.02. 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 communed and made a contribution of record during the current calendar year. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every meeting of the congregation.
 - d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other 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.
- 8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the congregation.
- 8.04. 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 NALC, and their ministries and structures through contributions of time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- 8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. death;
 - b. resignation;
 - c. transfer or release; or
 - d. disciplinary action by the congregation.

Chapter 9.

THE PASTOR

- 9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose.
- 9.02.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the NALC,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care;
 - 5) serve as the chief evangelist in his or her ministry, and
 - 6) proclaim God's love to 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;
 - 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; and
 - 3) impart knowledge of the NALC and its wider ministry through public provision of information, distribution of publications and other appropriate means,
- 9.03.** 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.
- 9.04.** a. The call of a 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 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, 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, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;

- 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty; or
- 6) the dissolution of the congregation.

b. If the congregation determines that it may be appropriate to end a call for one of the reasons set out in sub-section (a), the congregation shall consult with the pastor regarding the matter in accord with Biblical principles. If the congregation and pastor do not reach agreement, the congregation shall inform the Bishop of the NALC, who shall consult with the congregation and the pastor and shall attempt to reach an agreed resolution. If the Bishop fails to facilitate an agreed resolution, the congregation or the pastor may call a Congregational Meeting to consider the matter. At such a meeting, the pastor and the congregation shall have a full and fair opportunity to present their positions on all matters relevant for consideration. Thereafter, the congregation by a two-thirds vote may terminate the pastor's call. In all events, the congregation by majority vote may suspend a pastor with pay if the congregation determines that such suspension is necessary to protect the congregation and all whom it serves. No such suspension may last more than 90 days unless the pastor agrees otherwise.

- 9.05. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor may be appointed by the congregation.
- 9.06. 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 congregation. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- 9.07. 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.
- 9.08. The congregation may depart from the requirements in section 9.04 (a) by calling a pastor for a term of years. Details of such a call shall be in a writing that sets forth the purpose and conditions involved. Such call may be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions in section 9.04 (a) and 9.04 (b).
- 9.09. The pastor of this congregation shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation.
- 9.10. The parochial records of this congregation shall remain the property of the congregation.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

- 10.01. The meetings of this congregation shall be held as needed.
- 10.02. A Congregational Meeting may be called upon the written request of 20 percent of the voting members.
- 10.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or e-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, or sent to the last known e-mail address of such members, shall be sufficient.
- 10.04. 10 voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- 10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- 10.06. All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution.

Chapter 11.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- 11.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution or the constitution of the NALC, 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.

Chapter 12.

BYLAWS

- 12.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- 12.02.** 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.
- 12.03.** 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 at least 14 days before a Congregational Meeting called for that purpose.

Chapter 13.

AMENDMENTS

- 13.01.** Amendments may be proposed by at least two voting members. Proposals must be filed in writing with the congregation 14 days before a Congregational Meeting called for that purpose.
- 13.02.** An amendment to this constitution, shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregational Meeting according to this constitution by a simple majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next Congregational Meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

Chapter 14.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- 14.01.** This congregation in a legally called Congregational Meeting may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- 14.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a Congregational Meeting.

Chapter 15.

INDEMNIFICATION

- 15.01.** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who was authorized to act on behalf of the congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.