

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Trinity Lutheran Church

Monroe, Michigan

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS Christians unite for the purpose of having the Word of God correctly preached and the Holy Sacraments rightly administered by called and ordained Ministers of the Word (1 Cor. 1:12; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23-27; Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Col. 4:16);

WHEREAS Christians should practice fellowship with those who profess the true Christian faith (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25);

WHEREAS as a body they should administer the Office of the Keys in the public proclamation of the Gospel according to Christ's command and promises (John 20:21-23; Matt. 18:15-20); and

WHEREAS in such a body all things should be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40);

THEREFORE WE, A CONGREGATION OF CHRISTIANS of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, in the City of Monroe in the County of Monroe in the State of Michigan, founded on November 10, 1844, and incorporated under the Laws of the State of Michigan, August 29, 1924, under Act No. 84 of the Public Acts of 1921, **DECLARE IN THIS DOCUMENT THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS WITH WHICH OUR CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS, BOTH TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL, SHALL BE CONDUCTED.** We do so in the Name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Article I – NAME

The name of this congregation shall be TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH of Monroe, County of Monroe, Michigan.

Article II – CONFESSION OF FAITH

This congregation accepts, confesses, and teaches without reservation:

All of the canonical books of the Old Testament and the New Testament as the divinely revealed and verbally inspired Word of God and, therefore, the only source and regulation for the Christian faith and life (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; John 17:7; 1 Cor. 2:13); and

All of the symbolical books of The Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 as a true and correct exposition of the Sacred Scriptures and true Christian doctrine drawn from and in full agreement with the inspired Scriptures; to wit:

- The Three Ecumenical Creeds: The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed;
- The Unaltered Augsburg Confession;
- The Apology of the Augsburg Confession;
- The Large and Small Catechisms of Dr. Martin Luther;
- The Smalcald Articles;
- The Formula of Concord

Hence, no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated in this congregation which is in any degree at variance with these symbols, and all controversies which may arise in our midst shall be decided and adjudicated according to this form of doctrine.

Article III – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of this congregation shall be:

ESSENTIALLY:

To publicly proclaim the Gospel of the only True and Triune God which declares a human being, sinful by nature, is righteous (forgiven) before God by his Grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ, his Son Incarnate, crucified, risen and ruling, truly Lord over all forever;

FORMALLY:

To carry out the command of our Lord Jesus that the Word of God, both Law and Gospel, be taught in its truth and purity and that the Holy Sacraments be rightly administered according to Christ's institution (2 Tim. 4:2; Matt. 28:19; 14: 21-26; John 20:22-23; Matt. 16: 9; Acts 22:16; 2:38; Eph. 5:25-26);

To promote the true Christian faith (Eph. 4:3-6) and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism, and false doctrine and practice (Romans 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 John 4:1-6);

To carry the Gospel of Christ to the world pursuant to the command of Christ (Matt. 28:19-20) and in full cooperation with The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod;

To carry out an effective Gospel ministry that has to do with service that touches people spiritually and edifies (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 14; Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17) and the avoidance of any activity that does not have a true spiritual purpose and concern or which may tend to hinder the work of the Holy Spirit and distort the true purpose of the Christian Church (1 Thess. 5:19; 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Peter 2:5, 9);

To further the cause of Christian education by the provision of a Christian Day School and other educational agencies and by thorough instruction in Confirmation.

Article IV – MEMBERSHIP

A. TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP – Membership in this congregation is open to all those who have been baptized in the Name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the Ministry of the Word; to wit:

1. Baptized Members – are all who have been baptized in the Name and by the Command of the Triune God but who as yet are not eligible to partake of the Lord's Supper.

2. Communicant Members – are all who have been validly baptized and who have been instructed in the meaning of the Lord's Supper and who are able to examine themselves to partake of this Sacrament.

2.3. Voting Member – as defined in Article VIII(A) THE VOTING ASSEMBLY

B. QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP – The qualifications for membership in this congregation which apply to Communicant and Voting Members are:

1. That they be baptized in the Name of the Triune God;
2. That they join with us in accepting without reservation the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the verbally inspired Word of God in all its parts and the only rule and standard for faith and life;
3. That they profess and adhere to the Augsburg Confession and the Six Chief Parts of the Christian Doctrine as set forth in the Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther;
4. That they do not live in open and manifest evil, but lead a Christian life and walk worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal. 5:19-24);
5. That they are not members of any organization or lodge having a false religion, indulging in un-Christian practices, or presenting a way of salvation and life with God that is contrary to the Gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ;
6. That they submit to all of the rules and stated policies of this congregation and permit themselves to be evangelically admonished and corrected when they have erred or sinned.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS – This congregation is eager to serve the spiritual needs of people. All members of this congregation who enjoy the rights and privileges of this Christian fellowship shall consider it their God-given responsibility:

1. To worship with their "church-family" regularly and to partake of the Lord's Supper frequently (John 8:47; 1 Cor. 11:26; John 8:31);
2. To practice Christian love, fellowship and concern, the unity of faith, peace, and fellowship, forgiveness and compassion (1 John 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 John 2:8-11; 3:14-24; 4:1-21);

3. To bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and to this end instruct and train them in the Christian faith at home and at church (Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6; Luke 18:17; 9:48; 2 Tim. 3:15-16; Psalm 127);
4. To take every opportunity and time for further growth and instruction in Christian discipleship by making use of the opportunities for study of the Word of God which the congregation provides (2 Peter 3:18; John 5:39; Eph. 4:15);
5. To contribute of their time, treasure and talents, as the Lord has prospered them, toward the support of the Gospel Ministry of the congregation so that it may carry out its holy work and its missionary task to the world which it is to serve (1 Cor. 16:2; Matt. 28:19; 12:50; Eph. 5:8);
6. To do all in their power and ability to show their love for Jesus Christ by daily Christian living and witnessing which is to worship the true God and serve their neighbor (1 John 5:10; Is. 43:10; Acts 22:15; Matt. 25:14-46).

D. ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS –Persons desiring membership in this congregation shall apply to the Pastor(s) who shall determine their confession of faith and, thus, their eligibility to hold membership in the congregation. The Elders shall formally act upon the application at a regular meeting and shall see to the integration of the new member into the life of the parish

E. MEMBERSHIP CARE AND KEEPING

1. The Christian congregation has not only the call and commission to bring people into the Kingdom of God through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19), but also the Divine command to discipline the disciples (Matt. 28:20). What we call “Church Discipline” may be more aptly described as “Disciple-Keeping” for it is in essence and reality the Church’s task and function to safeguard and sustain the life of the disciple in the true faith of Jesus under the Word and Sacraments. This task rests on each Christian as a member of this congregation and commits to each member the responsibility to love.
2. The Pastor(s) and the Elders shall take steps to identify members not actively nurturing their relationship with Christ and His body, the church, especially in the practice of the faith in the home, worship and participation in the Means of Grace, and shall take steps to assist said member(s) in their faith journey.
3. Members who consistently and openly deny the Christian faith by speech or by an impenitent and ungodly lifestyle, will be counselled by the Pastor(s)/Elders. If such counsel does not lead to repentance, they will be placed under Church Discipline. If this is not effective in calling them to repentance, the process of excommunication will be initiated. If this process is not successful in bringing about repentance, they will be removed from the church roster.
4. Members who permanently relocated outside of the congregation’s area of ministry are encouraged to join a congregation near their new community. The church office will send a list of LCMS churches in the new area upon notice of the members’ relocation. The Elders will contact the members six months after the list is shared to follow up and encourage the members connect with a new church and transfer their membership. The Elders will follow up again after one year. If no action has been taken or our contact information is not valid, the members may be given a peaceful release from Trinity.
5. Members whose location is unknown and cannot be established for a period of six (6) months or more and cannot be ascertained after attempts are made through normal search methods are to be considered “Whereabouts Unknown” and no longer active members. Once a year has passed with no contact, such membership may be considered terminated. This is to be reported at the next Voter’s Assembly of the congregation.
6. When a member requests to join another congregation in affiliation with our synod a transfer will be granted. When a member requests to join a Christian congregation which is not affiliated with our synod, a release will be granted. When a member unites with a non-Christian church we will recognize this as a self-removal. Membership changes are to be granted by the Elders; Pastor(s) may grant immediate release on behalf of the Elders.
7. Excommunication will always be administered according to the prescription of our Lord in Matt. 18, and is to

be applied to any member who conducts himself in an offensively un-Christian manner; i.e., to one who openly adheres to false doctrine, gives clear evidence of an openly immoral life, or willfully despises the preaching of the Gospel and the Lord's Supper. The Pastor(s) and the Elders shall administer church discipline on behalf of the congregation. Persons who have been removed from the membership by excommunication or self-removal shall be restored, with all rights and privileges, when they repent and seek forgiveness through the Pastor(s) and the Elders. Both acts of discipline and restoration shall be made known to all communicant members by whatever means the Pastor(s) and the Elders deem most suitable.

Article V – THE OFFICE OF THE WORD (Holy Ministry)

- A. **THE DIVINE CALL** – The Office of the Word (The Holy Ministry or Pastorate) is instituted by God and is created by the Office of the Keys entrusted to a congregation. In this congregation the Holy Office shall be committed and entrusted only to such pastor(s) or candidate(s) who have been rightly called in a legally convened meeting of the Voting Assembly of this congregation. For election of a pastor or candidate a 2/3 vote shall be required at a meeting of the Voting Assembly in quorum.
- B. **QUALIFICATIONS** – The Office of the Word in this congregation shall be committed and entrusted to only such pastor(s) or candidate(s) who:
1. Accepts without reservation the confessional basis laid down in Article II of this Constitution;
 2. Is ordained and rostered by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod;
 3. Is a member of the synod to which this congregation belongs.
- C. **DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF THE WORD** – The pastor(s) shall be the “overseer(s)” of the congregation and shall be entrusted by the congregation with the task of serving the congregation with the precious Word of God. He/They shall be bound by this office to give his/their fullest abilities:
1. To preach, teach, and proclaim the Word of God, both Law and Gospel, in all of its truth and purity, boldly and confidently (Titus 1:9; 1Tim. 4:16; 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 4:2);
 2. To equip the members so that they may carry out their God-given ministry as members of the Royal Priesthood (Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Peter 2:5-9);
 3. To rightly administer the Holy Sacraments and the Office of the Keys in accordance with the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 4:1; Matt. 28:18-20; 18:18; 26:26-28; John 20:22-23; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25);
 4. To apply the Word of God to individuals according to necessity and in counseling, family visitation, sick-calling, missionary calls, pastoral calls, and in all ministerial functions (Heb. 13:17; Col. 1:3-14; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; James 5:14; Phil. 4:1-11; 2 Thess. 1:11-12; Mark 10:14);
 5. To set a good example by leading a godly life together with his whole household (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:4-16);
 6. In general, to work for the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to his several abilities (Acts 20:28; 2 Tim. 4:1-2; Eph. 4; 1 Cor. 14) and to carry out the Lord's command (Matt. 28:19-20) with the congregation in a true missionary motive.
- D. **RELATIONSHIP OF CONGREGATION TO PASTORS** – The members of this congregation shall hold themselves bound, as Holy Scripture clearly states:
1. To receive their Pastors as ministers of Jesus Christ (Luke 10:16; Titus 1:7; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Tim. 4:6);
 2. To accord them due honor and respect, love and obedience for the sake of their office and their own soul (1 Thess. 5:25; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17);
 3. To provide and care for them and their families' decent support and provide for their temporal needs according to its ability (Gal. 6:6; Matt. 10:7-10; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).

E. TENURE OF OFFICE

1. The Pastor shall obligate himself in his acceptance of the Divine Call, validly and legitimately issued, never to resign from office so long as it is evident that God's will is his continuance.
2. The Pastor shall in all cases notify the congregation of any Call which he receives from another congregation or institution or synod and shall consult with the congregation for their considerations, guidance, and prayers. The final decision regarding the call remains prayerfully with the Pastor.
3. The congregation may, in a Christian manner, through a 2/3 vote of the Voting Assembly, remove a Pastor from his office for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Willful neglect of pastoral duties or evident and protracted inability to perform the functions of his office;
 - b. Persistent violation of Article II of this Constitution;
 - c. Living a scandalous life.

4. Pastors may be called on an interim or part-time basis.

F. RELATIONSHIP OF PASTORATE AND MINISTRIES – In that the Office of the Word is to oversee the various ministries of the Christian congregation, the Pastor(s) shall see to it that those who are called by the congregation to minister to it as its teachers and other ministers shall:

1. Be in full agreement with the Confession of Faith of this congregation as stated in Article II;
2. Be called by the Voting Assembly of the congregation and never by a smaller body or an individual;
3. Perform their duties incumbent upon their special ministry as outlined in their Divine Call and/or stated in their contract;
4. Receive the honor and support commensurate with their service of ministry.

Article VI – THE MINISTRY OF TEACHING

A. THE DIVINE CALL -- Whereas the Christian congregation establishes its particular ministries under the Office of the Word and by the Office of the Keys, this congregation herewith establishes "The Ministry of Teaching" in its midst. This ministry shall be committed and entrusted to such a person who has been approved in a legally convened meeting of the Voting Assembly of this congregation. For election of a called teacher a 2/3 vote shall be required at a meeting of the Voting Assembly in quorum. For removal of a called teacher a 2/3 vote shall be required at a meeting of the Voting Assembly in quorum.

B. QUALIFICATIONS – The Ministry of Teaching in this congregation shall be committed and entrusted only to such a teacher who:

1. Accepts without reservation the confessional basis laid down in Article II of this Constitution;
2. Has successfully completed the educational requirements established by the synod at its various teacher-training institutions or by synodical colloquy;
3. Is or shall become a member of the synod to which this congregation belongs.

C. DUTIES – The Ministry of Teaching, serving within The Office of the Word, shall share the teaching function of this congregation. The called teacher is bound in this Ministry of Teaching:

1. To give concern to the total teaching and Christian education which is to minister the Word of God to this congregation;
2. To give special attention to the teaching of the Christian Day School and other educational agencies and groups within the parish;
3. To teach and proclaim the Word of God, both Law and Gospel, in all of its truth and purity, confidently and without compromise;
4. To set a good example by leading a godly life;
5. In general, to work in the teaching of the Word of God and the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to his or her several spiritual gifts.

6. Any change to the ministry of a teacher shall be handled as follows:
 - a. The change is negotiated with the teacher by the Principal and Pastor(s) and reported to the congregation.
 - b. If mutual agreement is not reached under a. the matter is referred to the Voting Assembly for final disposition.

D. RELATIONSHIP OF CONGREGATION TO TEACHING MINISTRY – The members of this congregation shall hold themselves bound, as Holy Scripture clearly teaches:

1. To receive their teachers as ministers of Jesus Christ (Luke 10:16; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Tim. 4:6)
2. To accord them due honor, love and respect for the sake of their holy office (1 Thess. 5:25; 1 Tim. 5:17);
3. To provide and care for them and their families' decent support according to its ability (Gal. 6:6; Matt. 10:10; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).

E. TENURE OF OFFICE

1. The called teachers obligate themselves in their acceptance of the Divine Call, validly and legitimately issued, never to resign from office so long as it is evident that God's will is their continuance.
2. The called teacher shall in all cases notify the congregation of any Call, which he or she receives from another congregation or institution or synod and shall consult with the congregation for its consideration and guidance. The final decision regarding the call remains prayerfully with the teacher.
3. The congregation may, in a Christian manner, by a 2/3 majority vote of its Voting Assembly remove a called teacher from his or her office for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Willful neglect of duties to which he or she is called or evident and protracted inability to perform the functions of his or her office;
 - b. Persistent violation of Article II of this Constitution;
 - c. Living a scandalous life.

F. RELATIONSHIP TO THE PASTORATE – Those called to the Ministry of Teaching obligate themselves to endeavor earnestly to live in Christian unity with the Pastor(s) and co-workers.

G. CONTRACT TEACHERS – It is permissible to contract with non-rostered teachers when it is in the best interest of the school. Contract teachers are at-will employees (bound by the terms of their contracts.)

Article VII – THE MINISTRY OF ELDERS

A. THE ELDERS' APPOINTMENT – Whereas this Christian congregation establishes "The Ministry of Elders" this ministry shall be committed and entrusted only to male Voting Members by appointment of and administered by the Pastor(s) under the Office of the Word and by the Office of the Keys.

B. QUALIFICATIONS – The Ministry of Elders in this congregation shall be committed and entrusted to such men who:

1. Accept without reservation the confessional basis laid down in Article II of this Constitution.
2. Are above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach (1 Tim. 3:2), not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not having a love of money (1 Tim. 3:3). He must manage his family well and see that his children obey and respect him (1 Tim. 3:4). He must not be a recent convert (1 Tim. 3:6) meaning one who has not attained a satisfactory level of spiritual maturity since his conversion; not pursue dishonest gain (Titus 1:7), love what is good, upright and holy (Titus 1:8), keep hold of the deep truths (Titus 1:9).
3. Part-time and full-time paid staff members are not eligible to serve as Elders.

C. DUTIES – The Ministry of Elders, serving under the Office of the Word, is bound in this Ministry to give his fullest abilities and:

1. Shall pray for the Pastor(s), professional workers, leaders and members of the congregation and encourage the same in word and deed. They are to set a godly example of Christian living, Christian stewardship, regularly attend worship and Bible study, and seek to assist by example in establishing an atmosphere of love and respect in the workings of the congregation.
2. Shall show genuine concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical welfare of all workers called to the congregation and their families, meeting needs as they arise.
3. Shall support and assist Pastor(s).
4. Shall support and assist in congregational worship.
5. Shall support and assist in the development of the congregation's spiritual life.
6. Shall support and assist in outreach missions.
7. Shall sit on boards and commissions involving worship or spiritual life of the congregation.
8. Shall receive all training as determined and directed by the Pastor(s).

D. RELATIONSHIP OF CONGREGATION TO ELDERS – The members of this congregation shall hold themselves bound, as Holy Scripture clearly states:

1. To receive their Elders as servants of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 4:1; Luke 10:16; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Tim. 4:6).
2. To accord them due honor, love and respect for the sake of their holy appointment (1 Thess. 5:25; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17).

E. TENURE OF APPOINTMENT

1. The Elder obligates himself in his acceptance of the appointment, validly and legitimately issued, to serve as long as it is evident it is God's will.
2. A Head Elder will be appointed by the Senior Pastor for a term of two (2) years.
3. The Elder shall in all cases notify the Pastor(s) and Head Elder if it becomes evident that he needs to resign his appointment.
4. The Senior Pastor may remove an Elder from his appointment for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Willful neglect of duties to which he is assigned or obvious and protracted inability to perform the functions of an Elder;
 - b. Persistent violation of Article II of this Constitution
 - c. Living a scandalous life.

F. RELATIONSHIP TO THE OFFICE OF THE WORD

1. Those appointed to the Ministry of Elders obligate themselves to endeavor earnestly to live in Christian unity with the Pastor(s), teachers, and all called ministers.
2. Perform duties as directed by the Pastor(s) utilizing their spiritual gifts.

Article VIII – POWERS VESTED IN THE CONGREGATION

A. THE VOTING ASSEMBLY – The Voting Assembly is the representative body of this congregation. Corporately representing the people of the congregation it is vested with the highest powers in the management and conduct of its affairs. No decision or arrangement shall have any validity for the congregation or for the church members as such (whether it proceed from an individual or from a group within the congregation) if it is not made in the name of and according to the general or particular authority granted by the congregational Voting Assembly. The congregation shall have no right, however, to accept or decide anything contrary to the Word of God, or contrary to Article II of this Constitution. The Voting Assembly consists of members who are active, known as Voting Members who comply with the following:

1. Is a communicant member confirmed in the Lutheran faith.
 2. Has reached the age of 18 years or older.
 3. Complies with Article IV.C.1-6, Article IV.E.1-7.
 4. Complies with the requirements defined in the Membership Care and Keeping Process, Part 1.
 5. Must have read and signed the Constitution and have attended one (1) prior Voting Assembly. Voting status becomes realized at the next Voting Assembly the member attends.
- 5-6. Virtual attendance and voting may be offered at the discretion of the Pastor and the president of the

congregation.

6.7. Part-time and full-time paid staff must recuse themselves from motions and voting on a question in which he or she has a direct personal or pecuniary interest not common to other members of the Church or School.

B. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS – The Board of Directors is the executive body of the Voting Assembly and is vested with the authority to provide fiduciary oversight and strategic planning for the congregation. The Board of Directors shall consist of seven voting members who meet each month or as scheduled by the president. Part-time and full-time paid staff members are not eligible to serve on the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall report to the congregation on the ministry's activities during the previous year, plans for the ensuing year, and financial commitments and needs while seeking guidance and approval of the Voting Assembly in special meetings as the need arises.

C. LEGAL POWERS

1. As an incorporated religious institution, this congregation claims all rights and privileges granted to it by the laws of the State of Michigan.
2. It shall have legal powers to purchase, hold title to, rent, acquire, manage, and dispose of such real estate and other property as it may deem necessary to accomplish its ministry.
3. It shall have legal powers to accept, hold, administer, and if deemed necessary and advisable, dispose of other property as it may deem necessary to accomplish its ministry.
4. If at any time a schism should arise in the congregation (which, Almighty God, graciously prevent), the property and all that pertains to it and all the rights and benefits, assets and liabilities, shall remain with those members who continue to confess and adhere to Article II of this Constitution.
5. In the event that the congregation dissolves, all property shall be disposed of by the final voters assembly for the payment of debts and all just claims against the congregation, and any and all surplus and all rights connected therewith shall be conveyed to and become the property of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

D. DIVINE CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF MINISTRIES – The power to call and dismiss pastors, teachers and other ministries shall be vested in the Voting Assembly and shall never be delegated to an individual or group in the congregation.

E. INDIVIDUAL RIGHT TO APPEAL – Any communicant member may appeal to the Voting Assembly of the congregation in regard to any matter pertaining to its affairs or government, submitting such an appeal in writing over his/her signature.

F. RIGHT TO PETITION – The right of petition to the Voting Assembly regarding any matter may be exercised and shall be acted upon when:

1. The petition clearly states the purpose for which it is presented;
2. Is signed individually by at least one hundred (100) communicant members;
3. Is read and explained at any regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting 30 days before any scheduled meeting of the Voting Assembly by three of its signers, and
4. Is read and explained at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Voting Assembly by three of its signers; and action on the petition shall be taken after a lapse of not less than 30 days from the first reading and after the purpose of the petition has been publicized to the membership of the congregation by a special letter.

Article IX – DIRECTORS OF THE CHURCH CORPORATION – The president, recording secretary and treasurer of the Board of Directors shall be the Directors of the Church Corporation and are authorized to represent the congregation in routine legal matters, except those requiring litigation which must have the authorization of the Voting Assembly.

Article X – THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION:

1. Are the president of the congregation, recording secretary and treasurer of the Board of Directors.

2. Will operate according to the Board of Directors Policies Manual created for and maintained by the Board of Directors.
3. The Senior Pastor and/or all other paid staff shall be non-voting and function in an advisory capacity when meeting with Board of Directors or committees/commissions established by the Board of Directors.

Article XI – THE ENDOWMENT FUND – An Endowment Fund (Trinity Lutheran Church of Monroe, Michigan Endowment Fund) is hereby established (August 12, 1984) to provide continuous financial support to the worldwide mission of Trinity congregation. All gifts, bequests and other funds placed in the Endowment Fund shall be held in perpetuity and invested to provide both income and growth of principal.

- A. AIM – The ultimate purpose of this Endowment Fund is to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- B. USE – The income and as much as 5 percent of the principal may be used each year for the ministry of the church both locally and worldwide, for example: education of full time church workers’ local, district or foreign missions; retreats, conventions or special training programs; extraordinary items of repair or maintenance of congregational facilities; aiding the special social ministries of Lutheran service organizations. It is not the purpose of this fund to defray any of the ordinary or necessary operating expenses of Trinity congregation, and neither the income nor principal shall be used for such purposes.
- C. MANAGEMENT – The Fund shall be managed and promoted by a committee of 5 members elected by the Voting Assembly. The members shall be elected to 3-year terms, the terms being staggered so that not more than 2 members are elected in any 1 year. There shall be no limit to the number of terms any member may serve. Each year after the annual election, the committee shall elect from its number its own officers, consisting of, at least, a chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer.
- D. AUTHORITY – The committee shall have general administrative powers over this Fund, including, but not limited to, the right to purchase, sell, exchange, lease, mortgage, invest, and reinvest any and all assets of the Fund. The committee shall have the power to employ attorneys, accountants, brokers, banks, or trust companies to aid in the duties of administering or investing this Fund. At the end of each fiscal year, it shall make a report to the Voting Assembly concerning the management, operating expenses and earnings of the Endowment Fund.
- E. DISBURSEMENTS – The committee shall recommend to the Voting Assembly how the income shall be used. The Voting Assembly alone has the right to determine the disbursements of said income, within the uses above set forth. The income of any one year does not have to be spent, but may be kept in the Fund as principal.

Article XII – CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES & ADMENDMENTS

1. The only unalterable article of this Constitution shall be Article II.
2. Any changes and/or amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the president of the congregation who, in turn, shall notify all voting members of the congregation of the specifics. The proposal(s) then shall be read at any meeting of the Voting Assembly with a 2/3 vote of those present in quorum required to approve any change or amendment.
3. Article XI (The Endowment Fund) may be changed or amended only by first following all of the requirements of No. 2 above and then by having the amendment ratified by a subsequent Voting Assembly by 2/3 majority vote providing that said subsequent meeting shall not occur within three months of the original meeting.

Article XIII – BYLAWS

1. This congregation may adopt such bylaws for its Constitution as are deemed necessary for the carrying out of its objectives and functions.

2. Proposed amendments or changes to any bylaw must be presented in writing at any regular meeting of the Voting Assembly. The approval of such changes or amendments shall require 2/3 vote of those present in quorum.

BYLAWS

Article I – MEETINGS

A. THE VOTING ASSEMBLY

1. The Voting Assembly shall meet on a Sunday in May and a Sunday in October. Special emphasis at the May meeting shall be the upcoming July 1-June 30 Work Program. Special emphasis at the October meeting shall be given to the Annual Reports and Election of Board of Directors members. The Voting Assembly shall meet in legal and valid meetings when notified by the president of the congregation 10 days in advance of the meeting and when announced in all worship services the two weeks prior to the meeting.
2. The Voting Assembly shall meet whenever action of the Voting Assembly is required for any proposal, major decision or matter affecting the entire congregation, such as the calling of a pastor or teacher. Such a Special Voters Meeting may be called by the Board of Directors or by a joint decision of the Pastor and president of the congregation with notice being given to all voters at least four days prior to the meeting.
3. Voting privileges rest in the eligible voters as prescribed in the Constitution Article VIII, A.

B. THE QUORUM – The quorum needed to make any meeting legal and valid shall be the number of eligible voters present. A quorum shall be considered present if proper notice is given in accordance with these Bylaws Article I, A.

C. ORDER OF BUSINESS (VOTING ASSEMBLY) – The meeting of the Voting Assembly in May/October or on other occasions shall with exceptions on occasion, follow the following agenda. The meeting shall be conducted at all times according to the usual parliamentary procedure outlined in Robert's Rules of Order and as much as possible with free and open discussion. The suggested agenda shall, as much as possible, include:

1. Call to Order by the president
2. Opening Devotion
3. Pastor(s) Report and Remarks
4. Roll Call of Voters (sign the register)
5. Reception of new voting members and the signing of the Constitution to establish their voting status
6. Approve minutes of the previous Voting Assembly
7. Financial Report(s)
8. Other Reports
9. Election (if any)
10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business
12. Adjournment and closing prayer or devotion

Article II – PROCEDURE OF ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS – This procedure shall apply to the election of the members of the Board of Directors who shall be elected at the October meeting of the Voting Assembly.

A. NOMINATIONS

1. There shall be a nominating committee of the Senior Pastor and 5 people appointed by the Board of Directors at its July meeting. The committee shall consist of 2 members of the Board of Directors and 3 voting members (Constitution Article VIII).
2. This nominating committee shall submit a slate of candidates for office to the Voting Assembly at its November meeting. This slate shall consist of candidates for each elected office to be filled on the Board of Directors. The slate of candidates for office shall be included in the agenda available to the voters with the meeting notice. Nominations may be submitted by an individual voting member in writing to the chairman of the nominating committee no later than 30 days prior to the Voting Assembly.
3. Each nominee for office shall be consulted as to whether or not he or she wishes to let his or her name stand for

office.

B. ELECTIONS

1. The election of the Board of Directors shall take place at the November meeting of the Voting Assembly and may be made by private, written, ballot. Before the vote, the recording secretary shall announce the names of the candidates and ask that each person stand and be identified. The elected officers will take office January 1 of the following year.
2. The term of office shall be two (2) years and be staggered to allow terms to overlap.
3. Should a member of the Board of Directors cease to be a communicant member (Constitution Article IV) the seat shall at once become vacant. Vacancies occurring on the Board of Directors for any reason may be filled by presidential appointment and confirmed by the Board of Directors, the appointee to serve the remainder of that term and then shall be eligible for election.

Article III – PROCEDURES FOR CALLING MINISTERS OF RELIGION – When this congregation calls a minister of religion, ordained or commissioned, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. When a pastor or commissioned minister is to be called, every member of the congregation shall be provided the opportunity to suggest one or more names for consideration.
2. A call committee shall be appointed [or an existing board or task force designated] to serve as a screening committee and shall submit all suggested names to the district president for information and evaluation. The committee shall review the list of candidates provided by the district and ultimately present to the congregation by public announcement its proposed list of candidates and their biographical sketches.
3. At a Voting Assembly called for the purpose of calling a new pastor or commissioned minister, the proposed list may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the assembly.
4. Ballot voting shall continue until a 2/3 vote determines the disposition of the call.

Article IV – INDEMNIFICATION

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the congregation shall indemnify any individual who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party, to any proceeding other than a proceeding by or in the right of the congregation, because he or she was or is a called employee, officer or board member of the congregation, or because of any action or inaction in such capacity, against liability and expenses incurred in the proceeding, if (a) he or she conducted himself or herself in good faith; (b) he or she reasonably believed (i) in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity, that his or her conduct was in the best interests of the congregation, and (ii) in all other cases, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interests of the congregation and (c) in the case of any criminal proceeding, that he or she had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE	1
Article I NAME	1
Article II CONFESSION OF FAITH	1
Article III AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
Article IV MEMBERSHIP	2
Article V THE OFFICE OF THE WORD	3
Article VI THE MINISTRY OF TEACHING	5
Article VII THE MINISTRY OF ELDERS	6
Article VIII POWERS VESTED IN THE CONGREGATION	7
Article IX DIRECTORS OF THE CHURCH CORPORATION	8
Article X THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS	8
Article XI THE ENDOWMENT FUND	8
Article XII CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES & AMEND.	9
Article XIII BYLAWS	9

Adopted:	January 28, 1968
As Amended:	April 29, 1973
As Amended:	November 16, 1975
As Amended:	January 29, 1984
As Amended:	August 12, 1984
As Amended:	January 20, 1991
As Amended:	January 16, 1994
As Amended:	January 16, 2000
As Amended:	October 21, 2001
As Amended:	April 21, 2002
As Amended:	October 15, 2007
As Amended:	May 20, 2012
Approved by District:	June 19, 2012
Approved by District:	August 25, 2015
Approved by Voters:	September 13, 2015
Amended by Voters:	May 21, 2017 (Article VIII, Section C, addition of paragraph 5)
Amended by Voters:	May 5, 2018 (Article IV, D; Article VI, E, 3; Article II, C, 1 & 2)