

lutheran congregations in mission for christ

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

As members of the priesthood of all believers, called by the Holy Spirit to confess the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in its purity, we give thanks for God's continual faithfulness and, by adopting this constitution, form this fellowship and association of congregations, uniting to carry out God's mission in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Article 1 - Name and Incorporation

- 1.01. The name of this association shall be Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. The official abbreviation of this association shall be LCMC. For the purpose of this constitution, LCMC hereinafter may also be designated as "this association."
- 1.02. LCMC is incorporated and its Articles of Incorporation were filed under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

Article 2 - Statement of Faith

- 2.01. We believe, teach, and confess the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- 2.02. We believe, teach, and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe in him.
 - 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 in the person and work of Jesus Christ through whom God was pleased to reconcile all things to himself.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

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- 2.03. We believe, teach, and accept the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the sole authoritative source and norm of our proclamation, faith, and life.
 - 2.04. We accept the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the scriptural faith we believe, teach, and confess.
 - 2.05. We believe, teach, and accept the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism as true witnesses to the Word of God, normative for our teaching and practice. We acknowledge that we are one in faith and doctrine with all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
 - 2.06. We believe, teach, and confess the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid expositions of the Holy Scriptures.
 - 2.07. We believe, teach, and confess the gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the priesthood of all believers for God's mission in the world.

Article 3 - Ministry

- 3.01. This association affirms the priesthood of all believers. It commits itself in function and structure to the equipping and supporting of all members of its congregations for their ministries within and outside of the household of faith. It is within and from this context of ministry that we declare that some are called by God to the public ministry of Word and Sacrament and other specific ministries. At the same time, all baptized members of our congregations are priests called by God to ministries in their daily lives.
- 3.02. Ministry standards shall be established by the Board of Trustees or a Board of Ministry and approved by the national convention of this association; they may be altered or amended only with the ratification and approval of a majority of the member congregations of this association.
- 3.03. A called minister of Word and Sacrament of this association shall subscribe to the confession of faith and otherwise comply with the ministry standards as established by this association and shall be subject to discipline as set forth in the rules and regulations adopted by this association.
- 3.04. God's call of a particular man or woman to the office of public ministry is confirmed by the call of a congregation. All calls to the public ministry will be issued by a congregation. Chaplains, missionaries, and pastors employed in other types of special ministries will be called by their congregation, or a congregation that chooses to sponsor them, and listed as deployed. Candidates for these ministries must meet the credential standards of the agencies they are endorsed to serve in addition to the credential requirements of LCMC.

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Article 4 - Membership

- 4.01. LCMC is an association of congregations. Each congregation that subscribes in writing to this constitution in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees shall be a member of this association.
- 4.02. Except as otherwise agreed in writing between this association and one or more member congregations, each congregation retains
- 4.03. LCMC, by action taken by the Board of Trustees, may suspend the membership of a church for cause by three-quarters vote of a quorum of the Board of Trustees of LCMC. The Board of Trustees shall give at least sixty (60) days written notice of intent to seek suspension of membership in the association. The board shall adopt rules and regulations, approved by the national convention, governing the suspension of membership in LCMC and shall report all such membership suspensions to all member churches of LCMC within 30 days. The suspension shall remain in force until the next regular or special meeting of the association at which time a decision regarding the lifting of the suspension or the termination of the membership of a member church be made by a two-thirds majority vote.

Article 5 - Governance

- 5.01. This association shall be organized through congregations, chapters, districts, areas, a Board of Trustees elected at the national convention of LCMC and the national convention of LCMC and such other organizational tools as its members choose to adopt.
- 5.02. The national convention of LCMC shall meet annually as convened by the Board of Trustees or as otherwise provided in the by-laws of this association. The national convention shall have only such authority as is specifically granted by this constitution, the by-laws of this association or otherwise granted by the members of the association. Each congregation shall be entitled to two delegates at all conventions where the LCMC business is conducted. Congregations with average worship attendance in excess of 500 shall be entitled to one additional delegate for every additional 250 average worship attendees over the 500 member base. Delegates shall be selected by member congregations pursuant to such internal procedures as member congregations may, from time to time, adopt. The manner of determining how delegates cast votes on behalf of their respective member congregations at conventions shall be determined by the member congregation on whose behalf the delegates are acting.
- 5.03. Subject to the limitations imposed by this constitution, the by-laws of this association and such other restrictions as may be imposed by the national convention of LCMC, the business and affairs of LCMC shall be managed by or shall be under the direction of a Board of Trustees.
- 5.04. Other matters of governance, organization, and order shall be addressed in the by-laws of this association.

Article 6 Amendment of Constitution and By-Laws

- 6.01. An amendment to this constitution may be proposed in writing by ten percent (10%) of the member congregations. At least four months prior to the next national convention, the proposed amendment shall be referred to the Board of Trustees for review, comment and recommendation, and shall thereafter be submitted in writing to the delegates to the national convention. Regardless of the position taken by the Board of Trustees on the proposed amendment, such proposed amendment shall be presented to the delegates to the national convention as required by this constitution. The adoption of any amendment shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the delegates present and voting at the next annual convention, provided that such amendment shall not become effective unless it is ratified in accordance with Section 6.03 below.
- 6.02. The Board of Trustees may propose an amendment six months prior to the next regularly scheduled national convention. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the delegates present and voting at such national convention but shall not become effective until ratified as provided in Section 6.03.
- 6.03. Any constitutional amendment, regardless of origin, must be affirmatively ratified by two-thirds majority vote of the member congregations acting in and through properly called congregational meetings, with each congregation entitled to one vote. Any proposed amendment not ratified within two years of the date of approval by the national convention shall be deemed rejected. The board of trustees is authorized to adopt rules and regulations governing the ratification process provided, however, that such rules and regulations are not inconsistent with this constitution. For the purposes of ratifying constitutional amendments, each congregation shall have one vote. Voting procedures will be defined in the by-laws of LCMC.
- 6.04. By-laws not in conflict with this constitution may be adopted or amended by the national convention of this association provided however that all such by-laws are approved by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting at the national convention and provided further that a majority of the member congregations of this association do not reject the adopted or amended by-law.
- 6.05. Amendments to this constitution and the by-laws of this association adopted prior to the first national assembly of LCMC shall be handled as provided by transition rules set out in the by-laws of this association. This provision shall be of no further force and effect following the first national convention of LCMC.