



Hope
Evangelical
Lutheran Church

Informational
Handbook

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Hope's Constitution

***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

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, Citrus Springs, Florida.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- *C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- *C2.02.** This congregation confesses 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 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.

- ***C2.03.** This congregation accepts 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.
- ***C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- ***C2.05.** This congregation accepts 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.
- ***C2.06.** This congregation accepts 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.
- ***C2.07.** This congregation confesses 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

- ***C3.01.** 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.
- ***C3.02.** 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. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.
- C3.03.** The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA or “this church”) as used herein refers in general references to this whole church, including its three expressions—congregations, synods, and the churchwide

organization. The name Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also the name of the corporation of the churchwide organization to which specific references may be made herein.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01.** The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- *C4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
 - f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- *C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:
 - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are 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. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.
- *C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions. Such descriptions shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Committees.
- *C4.05.** This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.
- *C4.06.** References herein to the nature of the relationship between the three expressions of this church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization—as being interdependent or as being in a partnership relationship describe the mutual responsibility of these expressions in God's mission and the fulfillment of the purposes of this church as described in this chapter, and do not imply or describe the creation of partnerships, co-ventures, agencies, or other legal relationships recognized in civil law.

Chapter 5.
POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.01.** The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- *C5.02.** The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- *C5.03.** Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
 - c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

- d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16, and continuing resolutions, as provided in Chapter 18.
- e. approve the annual budget;
- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

***C5.04.** This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Florida Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

***C6.01.** This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

***C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

***C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod. These special circumstances are limited either to calling a candidate approved for the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to contracting for pastoral services with an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion.
 - d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.
- *C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:
- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
 - b. This congregation ceases to exist.
 - c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.
- *C6.05.** A congregation may terminate its relationship with this church by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time the congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
 - b. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the bishop, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and

conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of the congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.

- c. The bishop of the synod and the congregation shall continue in consultation, as specified in paragraph a. above, during a period of at least 90 days after receipt by the synod of the notice as specified in paragraph b. above.
- d. If the congregation, after such consultation, still seeks to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless he or she is a voting member of the congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, shall have voice but not vote at the meeting.
- e. A copy of the resolution, attesting that the special meeting was legally called and conducted and certifying the outcome of the vote, shall be sent to the bishop within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted, at which time the relationship between the congregation and this church shall be terminated subject to paragraphs g., h., and i. below. Unless this notification to the bishop also certifies that the congregation has voted by a two-thirds vote to affiliate with another Lutheran denomination, the congregation will be conclusively presumed to be an independent or non-Lutheran church.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the bishop to the secretary of this church, who shall report the termination to the Churchwide Assembly.
- g. Congregations seeking to terminate their relationship with this church which fail or refuse to comply with each of the foregoing provisions in *C6.05. shall be required to receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- h. Congregations which had been members of the Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating their membership in this church.
- i. Congregations established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be required, in addition to complying with the foregoing

provisions in *C6.05., to satisfy all financial obligations to this church and receive Synod Council approval before terminating their membership in this church.

- j. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's first meeting as specified in paragraph a. above, another special meeting to consider termination of relationship with this church may be called no sooner than six months after that first meeting. If a congregation fails to achieve the required two-thirds vote of voting members present at the congregation's second meeting as specified in paragraph d. above, another attempt to consider termination of relationship with this church must follow all requirements of *C6.05. and may begin no sooner than six months after that second meeting.

***C6.06.** If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

***C6.07.** If this congregation considers developing an additional site to be used regularly for worship, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located and the appropriate unit of the churchwide organization before any steps are taken leading to such action.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

***C7.01.** If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

***C7.02.** If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

***C7.03.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with

representatives of the Florida Bahamas Synod.

- *C7.04.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body and have followed the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05., title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C8.02.** 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. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special 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, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of

other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

- ***C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.
- ***C8.04.** 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 synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- ***C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
 - a. death;
 - b. resignation;
 - c. transfer or release;
 - d. disciplinary action in accordance with provision 20.40. and the accompanying bylaws; or
 - e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 9.

THE PASTOR

- ***C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two- thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- ***C9.02.** Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- ***C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
 - a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;

- 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for 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;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
- 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;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Florida-Bahamas Synod of the ELCA.
- *C9.04.** 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, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.05.** a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by death or, following consultation with the synodical bishop, 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, no later than 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;
 - 4) physical disability, or mental incapacity of the pastor;

- 5) suspension of the pastor through discipline for more than three months;
 - 6) resignation or removal of the pastor from the roster of ordained ministers of this church;
 - 7) termination of the relationship between this church and the congregation;
 - 8) dissolution of the congregation or the termination of a parish arrangement; or
 - 9) suspension of the congregation through discipline for more than six months.
- b. When allegations of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above. or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3), above have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
- 1) The bishop in his or her sole discretion may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson, or
 - 2) When such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention an official recital of allegations by the congregation council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation.
- by The bishop personally shall investigate such conditions together with a committee of two ordained ministers and one lay person.
- c. In case of alleged physical disability or mental incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate
- d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from, all concerned persons after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendation first to the pastor and then to the congregation. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and the congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.

- e. If either party fails to assent to the recommendations of the bishop's committee concerning the pastor's call, the congregation may dismiss the pastor only at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by two thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b)) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
- f. If, in the course of proceedings described in paragraph c. or paragraph d. above, the bishop's committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action in accordance with the with the provisions of this church's constitution bylaws, and continuing resolutions.
- ***C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- ***C9.07.** 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 bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Unless previously agreed upon by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served.
- ***C9.08.** 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 before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- ***C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- ***C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may

depart from *C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.

***C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:

- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
- b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
- c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

***C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

***C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry

The Pastor should be encouraged to participate in ecumenical ministry.

C9.21. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily under contract as pastor of this congregation.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. The semi-annual meetings of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of five per cent (5%) of the voting members. The president of the congregation council shall call a special meeting upon request of the synodical bishop. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be

transacted.

C10.03. 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 electronic means, as permitted by state law to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.

C10.04. All voting members present at a legally called meeting shall constitute a quorum.

C10.05. All actions of the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

C10.06. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS

C11.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.

b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.

c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.

d. With the exception of the treasurer and financial secretary who need not be members of the Congregation Council to be appointed, only elected members of the Congregation Council shall serve as president, vice-president, and secretary and shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.

C11.02. The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor (s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 12 members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent

from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected at a legally called meeting of the congregation during the month of May. Their term of office shall be for three (3) years, with the term of office beginning on the next regularly scheduled meeting. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at worship the Sunday prior to the date they assume office. No member shall serve more than two consecutive full terms.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting.

C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced

or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

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

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Florida, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts, the sum total thereof not to exceed ten per cent (10%) of the current budget, excluding debt retirement, for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than ten per cent (10%) in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

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

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

C12.08. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation's responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a

roster of this church.

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

C12.11.The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

C12.12.A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

C12.13. The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

C13.01.The officers of this congregation and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.

C13.02.A Nominating Committee of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the January semi-annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.

C13.03.An Audit Committee of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.

C13.04.A Mutual Ministry Committee (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office shall be two

years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.

C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.

C13.06. Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

C13.07. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

C14.01. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.

C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

***C15.01.** Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of the congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Mathew 18; 15- 17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary; a) private council and admonition by the pastor, B) censure and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the consultation committee of the synod, and d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by paragraphs a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another

pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to C15.01 do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three lay persons and two clergy). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's effort to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- *C15.03.** If the consultation panel fails to resolve the matter, that panel shall refer the case in writing, including the written charges and the accused member's reply, to the Committee on Discipline of the synod for a hearing. A copy of the panel's written referral shall be delivered to the vice president of the synod, the Congregation Council and the accused member(s) at the same time it is sent to the Committee on Discipline of the synod. The Executive Committee of the synod Council shall then select six members from the Committee on Discipline to decide the case, and shall appoint a member of the Synod Council to preside as nonvoting chair. Those six members plus the nonvoting chair comprise the discipline hearing panel for deciding the case. The Congregation Council and the accused member(s) are the parties to the case.
- *C15.04.** The discipline hearing panel shall commence and conduct the disciplinary hearing in accordance with the provisions governing discipline of congregation members prescribed in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- *C15.05.** By the vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the discipline hearing panel who are present and voting, one of the following disciplinary sanctions can be imposed:
- a. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership for a designated period of time;
 - b. suspension from the privileges of congregation membership until

the pastor and congregation council receive evidence, satisfactory to them, of repentance and amendment of life;

- c. termination of membership in the congregation; or
- d. termination of membership in the congregation and exclusion from the church property and from all congregation activities.

***C15.06.** The written decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be sent to the vice president of the synod, the accused member(s), and the Congregational Council as required by the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. The decision of the discipline hearing panel shall be implemented by the Congregation Council and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.

***C15.07.** No member of the congregation shall be subject to discipline a second time for offenses that a discipline hearing panel has heard previously and decided pursuant to this chapter.

***C15.10.** Adjudication

***C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16.

BYLAWS

***C16.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

***C16.02.** 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.

***C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, provided that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.,

***C16.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

C16.05.A01.72 The congregation accepted the Approved Constitution for Congregations of the Lutheran church in America, 1972 edition, and, of

the alternates provided, adopted the following to apply to Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church:

- a. Article VI, Sec. 1: All who are on active roll of confirmed members shall be eligible to vote in all congregational meetings.
- b. Article VIII, Sec. 4: The church council may incur obligations more than \$1,000 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a congregational meeting.

C16.06.A02.80 The date of council meetings was changed to the third Wednesday of each month.

C16.07.A03.83 The term of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary shall continue until the new officers have been elected or appointed at the first regular meeting of Church Council following the Annual Meeting.

C16.08.A04.93 Resolution to implement an Endowment Fund:

- a. Whereas, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts God has given to humankind – the created world, the gospel, life, time, abilities, money, including accumulated, inherited and appreciated resources: and
- b. Whereas, the Scriptural principle of proportionate giving, to return to the Lord a portion of the gifts God has first given to his beloved children, is both a privilege and an appropriate response in all times and circumstances; and
- c. Whereas, Christians can give to the work of the church through bequests in wills, assignment of life insurance, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder and other trusts, assignment of certificates of deposit, and transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate); and
- d. Whereas, it is the desire of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church of Citrus Springs, Florida, to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion to our Lord expressed by the donors and in accord with the policies of this congregation:
- e. Therefore be it resolved, that this congregation in its annual meeting, approve and establish on the records of the church anew and separate fund to be known as THE ENDOWMENT FUND (hereafter called the “Fund” of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church of Citrus Springs, Florida.
- f. Be it further resolved, that the purpose of the Fund is to enhance the programs of the Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church of Citrus Springs apart from the general operating of the congregation; that no portion of the income generated by the Fund shall be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation.
- g. The committee is directed to use the bylaws of the Endowment Committee. A copy of the bylaws is kept in the church office and each

member of the committee has their own personal copy.

C16.09.A05.95 All gifts proposed to substantially alter the sanctuary, Luther Hall, or church property, must be recommended by the Pastors, council and approved by the congregation.

C16.10.A06.95 The congregation's interest will be served if hired employees do not serve on the Church Council.

C16.11.A07.07 There will be one congregational meetings per year. The fourth Sunday in January, to vote on the treasurer's report, financial report, budget, audits and annual reports and to vote on election of council members and committee reports. These meetings will be held at 9:15 a.m. Absentee ballots will be provided those members unable to attend meeting.

Chapter 17.

AMENDMENTS

***C17.01.** Unless provision *C17.04 is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least one or more voting members or by the congregation council.

Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

***C17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17.01., shall:

- be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
- be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
- have the effective date included in the resolution² and noted in the constitution.

***C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17.01. and * C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The synod shall notify the congregation of its decision to approve or disapprove the proposed changes: the changes shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

***C17.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into

conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of one or more voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice and call such a meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

***C18.01.** The congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.

***C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

C18.03.A01.89 Memorials not designated within 90 days or not designated by December 31 should be used under the discretion of the church council with the church's well being kept in mind.

C18.04.A02.89 Each committee of the Church Council be allowed to elect their own Chairman and he or she does not have to be a church council member.

C18.05.A03.91 Any two of four signatories may be used on the checking and savings accounts. Those authorized to sign are the Council President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

C18.06.A04.95 The Church Council set forth a general memorial fund. Memorials not designated within one year should be used at the discretion of the council with the Church's well being kept in mind.

C18.07.A05.95 A copy of council meeting minutes and treasurers monthly report will be placed on the bulletin board in Luther Hall and published in the monthly newsletter.

C18.08.A06.96 The Certificate of Insurance for the church requires that the financial books of all groups shall be audited. The annual reports of all committees' annual financial reports shall be included in their reports to the

congregation at the congregation meeting the fourth Sunday of January.

Additionally:

The Audit Committee will report the audit results to the Finance Committee in a written statement in a timely manner which will be forwarded to the Congregation Council.

Adopted by Council April 11, 2007

C18.9.A07.96 All cash donations (World Hunger, Blanket Fund, CUB, etc.) shall go through our treasury as benevolence.

C18.10.A08.96 The Church Council hereby adopts a policy of not allowing the Church property or publications to be used by any individual or company to advertise their services or products unless prior approval is obtained from the council at their regular monthly meeting. This restriction is not intended to apply to the advertising of Church sponsored activities or to the Fraternal Organization of the Church.

C18.11.A9.00 It shall be the policy of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church that members and non-members be requested, at the time of arranging a wedding or funeral, to give a minimum honorarium of seventy five (\$75) for the organist and an honorarium of fifty dollars (\$50) for the custodian when such services are required.

C18.12.A10.00 The property chairperson is responsible for allowing individuals or groups the use of equipment owned by the church (tables, chairs, etc.). The user should sign a simple receipt for borrowed property. Return date and time should be specified on the receipt. The administrative assistant (secretary) should schedule the use of buildings, classrooms, and facilities. If there is a scheduling conflict, this decision should be made by the pastor, Congregational President, or Property Chairperson.

C18.13.A11.00 Council Officers Duties

PRESIDENT

PURPOSE (authority): Shall lead this church council and congregation in carrying out their duties.

RESPONSIBLE TO: Congregation Council, Congregation, and Pastor.

RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- a. Meeting with pastor once a month to coordinate council activities, review and plan for mission and ministry.
- b. From Constitution, by-laws, Article 4 – The President shall:
 1. Preside at all meetings of the congregation and the church council.

2. Coordinate the work of the committees and be an ex-officio member without vote.
3. Carry out the will of the congregation as ordered by this constitution, by-laws and resolutions of the congregation.
4. Deliver an annual report to the congregation.
5. Appoint members of the audit committee (cf. Constitution, Article XI).
6. Name delegates in consultation with church council to conference, district and other conventions, as required.
7. Execute letters of call and countersign checks on behalf of the congregation.
8. Nominate persons to fill vacancies of elected offices including the vice president, church council and committees/boards, for council action.
9. Prepare the agenda in consultation with the Secretary for the regular and special congregational meetings and church council meetings.

VICE PRESIDENT

The vice president is an elected council member, and is elected by council to the office of vice president.

The vice president shall carry out the duties of the president when that officer is absent or incapacitated.

The vice president is an officer of the church council.

The vice president is a member of the Executive Committee.

The vice president's signature will be on all church bank accounts.

The vice president will accompany the president to the church safe deposit box and acknowledge deposits and withdrawals.

The vice president will support and assist the president in all church business.

COUNCIL SECRETARY

PURPOSE (authority): Shall keep accurate records of all council meetings and congregational meetings.

RESPONSIBLE TO: President, Pastor, and Congregation Council

RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- a. Providing congregation council and congregation meeting

information to the Pastor and President.

- b. From the Constitution and By-laws, Article 4, paragraph C. The Secretary shall:
 1. Record proceedings of the congregation and congregation church council; distribute copies to members.
 2. Retain and codify secretarial records to be filed permanently in the church office; keep duplicate personal set of records which shall be turned over to the successor.
 3. Keep attendance record of each council meeting; advise president of absentees and their reason for absence; notify members having two unexcused absences.
 4. Select council member to lead liturgy (devotions for each council meeting).
 5. Announce all congregational and congregation council meetings and arrange for meeting places.
 6. Assist Pastor in maintaining membership records; make roster of voting members available at each congregational meeting; prepare directory of church council and committee members.
 7. Assist president on agenda items, calling to attention matters deferred or referred to committees for further study and recommendations.
 8. Maintain a register of congregational and church council resolutions and policies; recommend closure when appropriate.
 9. Execute letters of call to pastors on behalf of the congregation.
 10. Be responsible for safekeeping of all official congregational documents (e.g. deeds, mortgages, articles of incorporation, constitution and by-laws, tax returns, etc.).
 11. Compile and distribute the annual report of the congregation and the congregational report (parochial) to the Evangelical Lutheran church in America.
 12. Notify the nominating committee of all offices to be filled 90 days prior to the annual meeting where elections are to take place.

TREASURER

- a. To oversee and monitor the financial assets of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church and to assure the wise use of these resources in carrying out the proclamation and work of the Lord.

1. Develop, implement and oversee the financial procedures, records and investments of the congregation.
2. Render monthly statements of income and expenses and compare these items with the adopted annual budget of the congregation.
3. Countersign all checks in payment of approved congregational expenses.
4. Prepare and present to the Finance Committee and the congregation an annual financial report.
5. Recommend written financial policies and procedures for each management of the congregations resources.
6. Provide assistance to the financial secretary in the accountability and deposits of all funds received by the congregation.

Additionally:

1. The treasurer shall approve all budgeted items. Prior to expenditure, the committee chairs will approve the expenditure.
2. All expenditures not included in the approved budget must be approved by the Church Council.
3. Since the treasurer has signatory authority and possessions of Hope Evangelical Lutheran checks he/she should not receive the monthly bank statements. These statements shall be received by a Finance Committee member who does not have signatory authority or handle cash. The individual shall be responsible for reviewing the checks written on the account and deposit information before forwarding the statement to the treasurer for reconciliation. The treasurer then will provide documentation of the reconciliation to the review individual.
4. All disbursements for goods and services shall be paid by check. Checks for purchases to be made by staff or volunteers can be obtained from the treasurer. The treasurer may develop any special control procedures for such check issuances.
5. The password to the treasurer's computer program will be placed in a sealed envelope in possession of the Finance Committee. The envelope is to be opened only under duress conditions.

Hope's Policies

Criteria for Use of Luther Hall

1. The use of Luther Hall for church related and outside community oriented activities is to be authorized and approved by church council.
2. Church groups and organizations directly related to the ministry and function of Hope Lutheran shall at all times have precedence in the use of Luther Hall.
3. **Luther Hall shall not be used for any commercial for profit making program not in keeping with the mission and ministries of the congregation.**
4. All activities infringing on church observances, worship and special season activities shall be pre-empted for that period.
5. Parking lot facilities are primarily for worship service use and church related meetings. There shall be no conflict of the use of this facility during church time.
6. All groups using Luther Hall shall have the responsibility for cleaning and putting away equipment used. All trash shall be removed from containers and placed outside in the garbage dumpster. Left over items from a yard sale shall be taken away by the sponsor group. Please dispose of any excess food.
7. If the kitchen is to be used by an outside group or organization, permission must be obtained by the Church Council.
8. The utensils may be used, and shall be cleaned after use. Rinse water must have a disinfectant and the entire inside of the microwave must be cleaned after each use. Coffee, disposable cups, milk, cream, sugar, shall provided by the organization using the facility. Our church organizations provide and store their own materials in the kitchen and these must not be disturbed or used without permission.
9. Equipment shall be turned off before leaving. Check rest rooms so they are in good order and no water is running. Turn off lights and lock all doors.
10. Wedding receptions, Anniversaries, and Birthday parties may be planned for a member and the member's immediate family without charges for the use of Luther Hall. A custodial clean up deposit will be charged according to the yearly church fee schedule. The deposit will be refunded upon a satisfactory church inspection. If the group decides not to have self clean up a custodial fee will be charged.
11. *Funerals may be planned for members and the member's immediate family. There will not be any fees charged for the use or cleanup of Luther Hall.*
12. Outside (non-member) functions – e.g. Weddings receptions, Anniversaries, and Funerals. Non – members are asked to donate fees for the use of Luther Hall and a janitorial fee according to the yearly church fee schedule. The use of kitchen equipment, tables and chairs are also included in this donation.
13. **No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the premises. No smoking is permitted in the church buildings. No food or beverages in Sunday school rooms and library.**
Any damages to property or equipment shall be reported immediately to the Property Chairman and/or Church Secretary

The facilities of Luther Hall are provided through the generosity of members past and present. We are privileged in having this beautiful building for our use, and we trust all who use it will have the same sense of appreciation and show it by kind and thoughtful use, not abuse. We ask for your cooperation at all times so that all may enjoy the facilities of Luther Hall.

Recommended Minimum Honoraria

Church wedding services

Ministerial - \$150

Organist - \$75

Funerals

Ministerial for funeral home service - \$150

Ministerial for gravesite only service - \$50

Ministerial for church Funeral Service - \$150

Organist - \$75

Luther Hall Fees

Luther Hall shall not be used for any commercial for profit making program not in keeping with the mission and ministries of the congregation.

“Red Book Page 31”

Wedding receptions, anniversaries, parties, etc.

Members – Custodial deposit/fee \$75

Funerals, wedding receptions, anniversaries, parties, etc.

Non-members - Custodial deposit/fee \$100

Utility fee \$1 per person per hour

An updated (Council approved) copy of page 31 from the **Red Book** should be given to all non-members who use Luther Hall so they are aware of the proper use of our property.

April 12, 2012

Regulations Governing Use of Niches In Hope's Memorial Garden

Whereas, Niches for human cremated remains are available to all members of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, Citrus Springs, Florida, including Associate Members and

Whereas it is desirable that owners have a written copy of regulations that have been adopted to govern the ownership and use of said niches:

The Council of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, hereinafter referred to as Hope, has adopted the following regulations, a copy of which shall be delivered to the owner of a niche, and which regulations shall be controlling in regard the ownership and/or use of said niches:

1. No use of a niche shall be made by any owner that is not acceptable to Hope and the regulations herein set forth shall be controlling unless a change has been reduced to writing and executed by the President or Vice President of the Council of Hope and the owner or his or her successor in interest.
2. Prospective owners may select a Niche, make the required contribution to Hope therefore, and not have the face of the Niche inscribed until used..
3. Once a Niche has been assigned and contribution therefore made, an exchange location, if desired, must be approved by Hope. Hope shall not prohibit the selection of a substitute Niche, if the desired exchange space is available and has not been previously assigned. Owners may agree upon an exchange of location without additional contribution.
4. A required contribution to Hope for the use of a Niche to contain the human cremated remains of one person shall be \$300. The contribution to contain the human cremated remains of two persons shall be \$400. A Niche shall not be used for the remains of more than two persons.

5. The required contribution shall be made prior to the assignment of the Niche site, provided that Hope may agree to accept time payments, subject only to the condition that the right to use of the assigned Niche shall not vest in an owner until the full required contribution has been made..

6. No refund of contributions will be made to other than the contributing owner and no refund once the face of an assigned Niche has been inscribed. The cost of inscription (currently one dollar per letter) shall be paid by the owner. Hope will provide a box suitable to contain the human cremated remains to be placed in the Niche without additional charge. In the event of damage to the face panel from vandalism or acts of God, the cost of replacing the face panel will be borne by Hope.

7. Once a Niche has been selected, the contribution therefore made to Hope and an acceptable location of a Niche has been assigned to the owner, the use thereof by the owner for his or her remains shall be perpetual; provided, however, the use thereof may be assigned by the owner to another person who is a member or associate member of Hope without a further payment to Hope for that purpose. Nothing herein set forth shall prevent Hope from agreeing to assignment of use to other persons as may be agreed upon by Hope.

8. Any expenses incurred in administration of the memorial gardens be submitted to the treasury for reimbursement.

9. The Social Ministry Committee shall be responsible for coordinating of the Memorial Gardens.

Approved February 12, 1992, by Hope Council

Policy and Procedures for Fund Raising

It shall be the policy of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church to conduct such program activities that are within the sphere of influence of the congregation. All program activities will be conducted as to the congregational Mission, "To Know Christ and Make Him Known."

1. All program needs for financial resources require prior approval from church council and are accommodated through "Free Will Offering." The following procedures are mandatory.

Procedures

- Permission for any fund raising must be granted by the Church Council.
- The programs will be open to the public; however all donations are to be solicited from our church members only.
- Two members (not of the same family) of the organization shall count and verify all funds.
- Verification of the funds shall be recorded on the form provided by the church and kept on file for audit.
- All funds shall be deposited by the treasurer of the organization into the organization's account.
- All checking accounts must have two signatures. Those who are designated to sign checks must not be from the same family.
- Mandatory auditing of all financial records shall be done in January of each year by the auditing committee appointed by the Church Council.

2. Any external organization using our facilities, with our permission, must obtain prior approval from church council for any fund raising activities.

Approved December 9, 1998 by Hope Council

Real Estate Donations Policy

Policy Statement

It shall be the policy of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, Citrus Springs, Florida not to accept contributions of real estate or tracts of land offered or contributed by any source unless such offer or contribution has that capacity and capability of expanding or improving the existing church and/or has the potential of enhancing the congregational witness and programs in the community in which it serves and not create a financial liability.

Approved January 24, 1999 by the Congregation

Safe Haven for Children

WHEREAS the social upheavals of our time and the growing gap between rich and poor have been especially damaging to the lives of children and families; and

WHEREAS, as we prepare for the new millennium, we must assure the youngest and most vulnerable members of our world that they have a future; and

WHEREAS we long for children to be free from fear and to live in faith;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this congregation, Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, commits itself to be a Safe Haven for all children and their families and caregivers, by:

1. Building Christ-centered, positive, trusting relationships that nurture the healthy growth of children and strengthen families.
2. Using our resources to provide a sanctuary for children.
3. Creating a Gospel-centered, faith based teaching and learning environment of hospitality that welcomes all children with their families and caregivers.
4. Developing programs and places that help children to flourish.
5. Collaborating with other faith communities, agencies, and service organizations that work for the well being of children in our community.
6. Working with the government for more public measures that support the well being of children.
7. Supporting the efforts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to meet the basic needs of children through Lutheran social ministry organizations, as they provide caring services for children, and through the ELCA World Hunger Program, which carries our concerns for children throughout the world.

Approved July 30, 2000 by Congregation

HOPE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Personnel Policies

Revised by the Executive Committee and Congregation Council – January 2005

These policies shall apply to the paid, regular employees of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Personnel Administration

Lines of Responsibility

The development of a code of Personnel Practices shall be the responsibility of the Congregation Council.

The Congregation Council, Pastor and/or appropriate committees (as stated in job descriptions) shall have the responsibility of carrying out the Personnel Policies as approved by the Congregation Council.

Staff Support Committee

A Staff support committee is available for support, encouragement, and assistance to all employees.

Review

A review of these policies shall occur annually by the Executive Committee and the Staff Support Committee.

Definition of Employee

Permanent – Full Time

An employee who works 40 hours per week.

Permanent – Part Time

An employee who works on a regular, continuing basis and works a minimum of twenty (20) hours but less than forty (40) hours per week.

Temporary

An employee who is hired on a temporary basis to fill a vacancy. Length of employment shall be specified at the time of hiring and no notice of dismissal shall be required.

Employment Practices

A personnel record for each employee shall be maintained and carefully protected. This record shall contain applications, references, agreements, job description, evaluations, and correspondence relating to the employee.

In the course of evaluating a candidate for a position, references may be requested.

Prospective employees will be informed of the specific position requirements and qualifications sought. They will also be presented with a copy of the contract containing the job description for which they are applying.

Probation Period

No applicant for employment shall be deemed permanent (full or part time) until a three (3) month period of probation has been completed with a satisfactory review. A probationer may be released from employment at any time during the probationary period.

Vacation and sick leave are accrued while on probation, but cannot be taken until satisfactorily completing the probationary period. Separation from employment, for any reason, during the probationary period results in forfeiture of payment for accrued vacation leave.

Following successful completion of the probationary period, an employee shall be entitled to all benefits and privileges as set forth in the Personnel Policies.

Separation from Employment

Causes for Separation

1. Dismissal – an involuntary separation.
2. Reduction in staff.
3. Resignation.

Termination of Wages

When an employee is separated from employment due to dismissal, wages shall be terminated immediately upon notification of dismissal. Compensation for any accrued vacation time shall be included in the final paycheck provided the employee has successfully completed the probationary period.

Dismissal

A staff member may be dismissed for the following reasons:

1. Continued or gross neglect of duty.
2. Excessive and unauthorized absenteeism or tardiness with out a justifiable cause.
3. Incompetence, based on an evaluation and failure to maintain a standard of performance as required by the church.
4. Insubordination, including refusal to do assigned work for which the employee is qualified.
5. Habitual use of intoxicants or non-prescribed drugs, including indulgence or effects of same while on duty.
6. Gross misconduct.
7. Conviction of a criminal act.
8. Neglect or willful damage to property, misuse or waste of supplies, property or equipment.
9. Use of bribery or pressure to secure advantages.
10. Dishonesty, including unprofessional conduct.
11. Falsification of information given for personnel records.
12. Failure to work the hours as agreed upon in the contract.

Resignation

All personnel shall be required to submit written notice of resignation at least two (2) weeks prior to the effective date of resignation.

Failure to give notice results in forfeiture of pay for any accrued

vacation time. The employee will normally be required to use any accrued vacation time during the period of notice.

Reduction in Staff

Whenever it becomes necessary to reduce staff due to curtailment of funds and/or work, termination will be made with considerations of the church staffing requirements, personal qualifications, and past performances. Final determination will be at the sole discretion of the Congregation Council.

Employee Evaluation

Following the probation period, an employee shall be evaluated annually. This is to be done in the fall prior to the Budget process. The employee's immediate supervisor and/or committee responsible for his/her position shall do the evaluation.

At the time of the evaluation, a written evaluation shall be presented to the employee for their approval, comments and signature. Should the employee not agree with the evaluation, a place for their comments shall be provided. A copy signed by the supervisor and employee shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

The Executive Committee shall review an unsatisfactory evaluation within thirty (30) days, to determine if further action shall be taken and this report shall be presented to the Congregation Council for final action.

Hours of Work and Basis of Compensation

Work Hours

The work week and hours will be established in each individual's contract as agreed upon by the Congregation Council, pastor and/or the appropriate committee. Compensatory time off for longer than a normal work week can be given at the discretion of the supervisor.

Employees are only entitled to work their contractual hours. Paid overtime hours must be pre approved by Congregational Council.

Employee Breaks

Employees working an eight (8) hour day shall be entitled to a thirty (30) minute lunch break to be taken away from their desk/office.

Employees working four (4) consecutive hours shall be entitled to one fifteen (15) minute break for each four (4) hours worked.

Holidays and Vacation

Permanent full time and part time employees working 20 hours or more per week shall be entitled to the following holidays with pay (Holiday pay shall be 1/5th of the employee's normal weekly pay.):

New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Friday, Christmas Day, and a Personal Holiday to be taken during the month of the employee's birthday. If the Holiday falls on a weekend, the day off will normally be the Friday before or the Monday after the Holiday.

Employees, other than pastoral staff, shall be granted two (2) weeks paid vacation upon completion of a year of employment. Vacation time is not cumulative. Full time employees will receive three (3) weeks after five (5) years and may receive, by Congregational Council approval, additional vacation after ten (10) years full time employment. A part time employee (twenty (20) hours to less than forty (40) hours per week) will earn a one-half year credit for each year worked. After ten (10) years employment, additional vacation may be given on an individual basis if approved by the Congregational Council. Pastoral staff has different guidelines for vacation leave. All vacations are to be pre approved by the immediate supervisor as follows:

POSITION	APPROVING AUTHORITY
Church Secretary	Pastor or Council President
Church Custodian	Chairperson – Property Committee
Choir Director	Chairperson – Worship & Music Committee

Church Organist
Committee

Chairperson – Worship & Music

Payment

Payment to the employees shall be made on the fifteenth (15) and the last working day of the month.

The normal deductions for FICA and Withholding Taxes shall be made. Employees will be made aware of the nature and the amount of the deduction. Additional deductions may be made when agreed upon by the employee and their supervisor for specific items. All employees shall be required to complete a W-4 form.

Permanent full time and part time employees working twenty (20) hours or more per week, other than Pastoral Staff, will be granted up to five (5) paid sick days per year. Sick days are not accumulative. Pastoral staff has different guidelines for sick leave.

In the event of a work-related accident, covered by Workman's Compensation, the amount of the Workman's Compensation Payment, exclusive of medical payments, shall be deducted from the regular salary. The total of the two shall not exceed the regular salary. The employee will be paid only for the first seven (7) workdays.

Compensation/Pay Increases

Salaries of all employees shall be subject to yearly review by their immediate supervisor and/or committee responsible for the position. Recommendations for increases shall be presented in writing to the finance Committee.

Increases granted will be based on employee performance and cost of living increases. Any increases granted shall be retroactive to January 1st of each year. All increases must be approved by the Congregation Council and Congregation as a function of the annual official Mission and Ministry program approval.

Grievances

A grievance is defined as the dissatisfaction that occurs when an employee thinks or feels that any condition affecting them is unjust, inequitable, a hindrance to effective operation or creates a problem.

An employee shall not have the right to file a grievance against a performance evaluation unless it is alleged that the evaluation is based on factors other than the employee's performance.

Grievance Procedure

The employee will report the grievance to their immediate supervisor and/or Staff Support Committee orally and in writing. If not resolved within ten (10) working days, the grievance should be presented in writing to the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council. The Executive Committee shall make every effort to resolve the problem within fifteen (15) working days from the date it was submitted.

An employee who is not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Committee may submit in writing the grievance to the Church Council. The Congregation Council shall act to resolve the matter.

An employee shall have the right to appear before the Congregation Council.

A majority vote of the Congregation Council shall prevail as the final decision in the matter.

Personnel Summary

Personnel Policies cannot be written to cover all circumstances; therefore, any situation not covered in these Personnel Policies shall be thoroughly investigated by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council and referred to the Congregation Council for final action.

A decision will be made to resolve any problem or situation by the

Child Sexual and Physical Abuse Prevention Policy

Purpose

All institutions in which children and youth participate, whether religious or secular, face a moral and legal challenge to provide a safe environment free from the potentially devastating effects of either incidents of sexual abuse or the unfounded allegations that such conduct has taken place. It is incumbent upon Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church through its Council, leadership, staff, and members to implement policies and procedures which will make meeting this challenge possible.

The goals of a Child Sexual and Physical Abuse Prevention Policy are:

1. To protect children and youth in church programs from sexual abuse.
2. To educate those who work with children and youth about child sexual abuse issues.
3. To protect leaders, staff, teachers, and volunteers, as well as the congregation as a whole, from potential allegations of abuse.
4. To curtail to the greatest possible extent the risk of tort liability to the congregation because of child sexual abuse claims.

Structure

Adoption of a Child Sexual and Physical Abuse Prevention Policy will entail five primary areas of action set forth below.

1. Adoption by the Congregation Council of a policy statement as a continuing resolution concerning child sexual abuse applicable to all church activities, all programs on or off the church campus, and to all persons on the church campus, whether staff, teachers, volunteers, members, or visitors.
2. Adoption of personnel practices calling for the use of standardized child

sexual abuse screening forms for compensated staff and volunteers working with children or youth and the incorporation of such practices in the personnel manual.

3. Implementation at an individual program level specific practices designed to eliminate the potential for incidents or allegations of abuse.
4. The adoption of procedures for reporting and responding to incidents or allegations of abuse.
5. Designing and the implementation of educational programs for staff, teachers, and volunteers concerning child sexual abuse issues and the responsibilities of the church and its workers in youth and children's programs.

Child Sexual and Physical Abuse Prevention Policy

1. *Two Trained Care Givers Rule*

- 1.1 The goal is to have two (2) trained care givers present when caring for minor children under the auspices of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- 1.2 Hope Evangelical Lutheran Nursery, Sunday School, and Vacation Bible School will operate under the State of Florida's Department of Children and Family Services guidelines.

2. *Appropriate Behaviors*

In keeping with our mission, Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church seeks to provide a Christian environment where minors will be safe from physical and sexual abuse and will feel safe, secure and valued. Adult care givers are to be models of Christ's love as they relate to minors.

Everyone is a child of God and as such, all people should treat each other with respect.

The following are appropriate behaviors for adults to use in relating

to minors when working or volunteering for the church:

- 2.1 Listen carefully to children and show interest in what they have to say.
- 2.2 Pray that our children may grow in faith in God and respect for each other and creation.
- 2.3 Be fair and consistent.
- 2.4 Have a sense of humor, enjoy the children, smile often, be flexible and giving.
- 2.5 Focus on positive behaviors and praise the child for that behavior.
- 2.6 Set clear limits that can be managed by adults and understood by children.
- 2.7 Use appropriate, positive, steps when discipline is needed, and focus on the behavior, not the child.

3. *Prohibited Behavior*

The following behaviors are prohibited for all paid employees and volunteers of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church.

- 3.1 *Corporal Punishment*, which is use of spanking to discipline a child.
- 3.2 *Physical Abuse*, which is any physical injury inflicted by an adult on a child by other than accidental means.
- 3.3 *Sexual Abuse*, which is a person's employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor to engage in any sexual act as defined by the Law of the Sate of Florida.
- 3.4 *Sexual exploitation*, which is conduct by a child's care giver that allows, permits, encourages or requires that a child to engage in prostitution or child pornography.
- 3.5 *Inappropriate touching or fondling of a sexual nature* of a minor by any adult, to include indecent exposure.

4. Reporting Requirements

- 4.1 *Reporting Alleged Violations.* All paid personnel and volunteers of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church are to report alleged violations of prohibited behaviors in writing to the supervisor associated with their ministry. That staff person shall report to the pastor or Executive Committee. All such reports shall be made in compliance with the law of the State of Florida.
- 4.2 *Reporting alleged violations to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).* The President of the Congregation Council, the pastor or the council's designate shall report in writing all alleged violations to the Florida-Bahamas Synod Office of the ELCA.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES

5. General Guidelines For Investigation Of Allegations

- 5.1 Treat all complaints as serious contacting the church's attorney and others as may be necessary. In complaints involving sexual abuse, the insurance company and the ELCA should be contacted immediately.
- 5.2 Begin investigation of complaint as expediently as possible from the time of receiving the complaint (normally within 24 hours).
- 5.3 Two council designated persons shall do all the interviewing of the victim, the accused, and the supervisor of the accused.
 - a. If the Pastor is the accused, the Pastor shall be removed from the process and the Congregation President, in consultation with the Synod Bishop, shall appoint a designate.
- 5.4 Whenever an investigation is begun, the President of the Congregation Council shall initiate the investigation.
- 5.5 The Congregation Council will guard the confidentiality of the complaint and of the investigation as much as possible. Emphasize the confidentiality of the investigation to each person who is interviewed, and instruct the person not

to disclose any information regarding the complaint or investigation to anyone.

- 5.6 A reporter designated by the Congregation Council will make detailed written notes of each conversation, noting the persons present, date, time, location and details of the conversation. Have the interviewee review the notes and sign that they are accurate. (With the interviewee's permission, the conversation may be tape recorded rather than taking written notes. Permission must be obtained before any recording is made.)
- 5.7 These procedures for investigation are guidelines only. Situations may arise where some or all of these procedures are not applicable.

6. Investigation Of Allegations When the Accused Admits the Conduct

- 6.1 Have the accused sign a confession and give written permission to have the confession made public when appropriate. (Refer to section 7.28 re: "Disclosure if just cause exists.) An attorney can be present if the accused so wishes.
- 6.2 Report the matter to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services.
- 6.3 Immediately remove the individual from any volunteer or paid position involving contact with minors until the complaint is resolved.
- 6.4 Follow the recommendations for responding to the victim and the victim's family.

7. Investigation Of Allegations When the Accused Does Not Admit the Conduct

Interview the alleged victim in the presence of his or her parents or guardians.

- 7.1 Assure the victim and the victim's parents that the church takes very seriously any allegations of sexual or physical misconduct and will not tolerate any sexual or physical abuse.

- 7.2 Explain the investigative procedure, screening, and supervisory process to be followed.
- 7.3 Explain the victim's right to anonymity.
- 7.4 Make written notes of the conversation including a detailed account of the alleged incident(s). Include any corroborating evidence such as medical records, notes, letters or witnesses.
- 7.5 Ask the victim and the victim's family what action they would like the church to take if the accused is found legally guilty. Be sure to make a written record of the response.
- 7.6 Ask the victim and the victim's family if they have discussed the alleged incident with anyone else (e.g., a pastor, counselor, doctor, friend, spouse, relative, co-worker).
- 7.7 Ask the victim and the victim's family if they have reported the incident to the proper authorities, or if they plan to report it. Inform them of the proper authorities, and encourage them to contact these agencies for medical care and counseling.
- 7.8 When the record of the conversation is complete, ask the victim and/or parents/guardians to sign a statement verifying the accuracy of the account.

Interview the Accused.

- 7.9 Inform the accused of the nature of the complaint. Advise the accused that the church will thoroughly investigate any allegation of sexual or physical abuse.
- 7.10 If the victim and the victim's parent(s)/guardian(s) have consented to the disclosure of the victim's identity, interview the accused about the alleged incident, making detailed written notes of the conversation.
- 7.11 If the victim has requested anonymity, describe the allegations without revealing the victim's identity. Interview the accused about the alleged incident.

- 7.12 If the accused denies the allegations, ask what motives might cause someone to make such allegations.
- 7.13 When the record of the conversation is complete, ask the accused to sign a statement verifying the accuracy of the account.

Interview the Supervisor of the Accused (if any).

- 7.14 Summarize the allegations against the accused. Ask questions regarding knowledge of allegations (past & present), action taken by supervisor, possible motives, and if screening procedures and policies were followed.
- 7.15 When the record of the conversation is complete, ask the supervisor to sign a statement verifying the accuracy of the account.
- 7.16 If the supervisor is unwilling to be interviewed ask him/her to sign a statement to that effect.

Resolution of the Charge If Reasonable Cause Exists.

- 7.17 Immediately remove the individual from any position involving contact with minors until issue is resolved.
- 7.18 Report the matter to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services. Report should be made by one of the interviewers.
- 7.19 Follow personnel policy when the accused is an employee of the Church. The person under investigation may be suspended from his or her duties while the investigation is being conducted. If there is reasonable cause to believe the conduct incurred and was inappropriate under the Church policies, the employee will be placed on administrative leave until the case is resolved.
- 7.20 Follow the recommendations for “Responding to the victim and the victim’s family.” (Refer to section 7.32)
- 7.21 Review the recommendation of the victim and victim’s family regarding appropriate disciplinary action. (Refer to section 7.5)
- 7.22 Inform the Congregation Council of the investigation and steps taken.

- 7.23 Inform the victim and the victim's family of action taken as a result of the investigation.
- 7.24 Inform the accused of action taken as a result of the investigation.
- 7.25 Keep the congregation informed when appropriate. If communication is to be by letter, send it only to active, confirmed adult members and mark the letter and envelope "Privileged and Confidential." State only facts that can be established as true. Have the letter reviewed by an attorney before it is sent. If communication is to be oral, allow only active, confirmed adult members of the congregation to be present, read a written statement which follow the above guidelines and has been reviewed by legal counsel. Do not attempt to answer questions or make comments.

Resolution of the Charge If Evidence Is Inconclusive.

- 7.26 Discuss the case, either in person or by phone, with the Department of Children and Family Services. If the report is made by phone, it should be done over a phone that records the conversation. You must inform the authorities that the conversation is being recorded. After completing the report, transcribe the conversation so that a written record is kept. Include the name and position of the person contacted. If the report is made in person, both investigators should be present and prepare and sign a detailed written memorandum of the conversation including the details of the conversation, and the name and position of the person contacted.
- 7.27 The individual must immediately be removed from any volunteer/paid position involving contact with minors until the issue is resolved.
- 7.28 Consult with the church's attorney and follow personnel policy when the accused is an employee of the Church depending upon the final resolution of the maker, the employee will be disciplined up to and including discharge from employment as appropriate.
- 7.29 Inform the Congregation Council of the investigation and steps taken, keeping in mind the necessity of confidentiality throughout the investigative process.
- 7.30 Inform the victim and the victim's family of action taken as a result of the investigation.

7.31 Inform the accused of action taken as a result of the investigation.

Responding to the Victim and the Victim's Family.

7.32 Church leaders should frequently contact the victim and the victim's family to express concern and make the services of the church available to them. If the accused is found guilty or confesses and the church wants to offer financial assistance to hire or retain a professional counselor for the victim, state in writing the parameters of the counseling, including the name of the counselor, the number of sessions, and the maximum dollar cost to the congregation.

Responding to the Media.

7.33 Refer all media inquiries to the President of the Congregation Council of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church.

7.34 The President or a designated spokesperson should emphasize the congregation's concern for victims and the extensive steps the congregation has taken to provide a safe environment for children and to reduce the risk of child abuse. Describe all the precautions taken and the policies implemented. Be proactive and positive about Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church's approach to child abuse.

Approved by Council July 2000

Chancel Chimes Guideline and Procedures

The Chancel Chimes, a music ministry of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, shall consist of a conductor and an assistant (if at all possible) that will train and develop the talent at hand to use chimes to praise the Lord; this is to be done in a non-threatening manner so that all that participate will work diligently for musical perfection but enjoy Christian fellowship and fun at the same time. Members will be accepted from the worshipping body of the congregation although non-church members will be invited to join the Choir. There are no age exclusions within this choir; however if a member under the age of 18 years old joins this choir, then the rules of Safe Haven for Children (Hope's Policies, approved 7/30/2000 by the Congregation) and Child Sexual and Abuse Prevention Policy and Child Sexual and Physical Abuse Prevention Policy, approved by Council 7/2000) will also apply. Musical reading knowledge is not necessary but only the desire to develop a musical talent in a worshipful manner. It will be the desired goal of the conductor that the Chancel Chimes play at least once a month during a worship service. The Chancel Chimes shall also be available to play for baptisms, funerals, weddings and other special celebrations with the Church providing appropriate music is available and enough rehearsal time to assure that the musical piece and performance is optimum.

Conductor's Responsibilities:

1. The care and maintenance of the chimes, bells, cases, tables, pads, coverings, book risers, bended-books and music and, in general, all of the chime/bell equipment.
2. Choose appropriate music for the seasons of the Church. The music is to be filed in a logical manner so that it may be reused.
3. Honor all copyright music laws.
4. Prepare a budget annually and submit it to the Director of Music (or the Chairperson of the Worship and Music Committee in the Director's absence).
5. Conduct and oversee rehearsals so that the talent of the Chimers may be developed and familiarity of the musical selection will be performed as well as possible.
6. The Conductor (and assistant) shall keep their musical abilities fresh

- through practice, workshop and musical associations.
7. The conductor shall be a member of the Worship and Music Committee.

Chancel Chime Musician Responsibilities:

1. To use their talents to Praise the Lord with a musical instruments.
2. Attend scheduled rehearsals.
3. Be open to nurture and instruction to enhance their musical talent and abilities.
4. Be available to play at least one worship service a month.
5. Attend musical workshops to increase their musical knowledge and skill.

Outside Musical Performances:

The Chancel Chimes may play at social functions outside of the Church (ie local town performances). However, Church performances will always be given priority over outside performances. Notice of the outside performance will be given to the Director of Music (Chairperson of the Music and Worship committee in the absence of a Director of Music) at least two weeks prior to the performance. The conductor is responsible for the care of all of equipment while off site of the Church building. The Property Chairperson will also receive notice of all equipment used and the date of return of such equipment per Chapter 18 of the Bylaws, Continuing Resolutions C18.12.A10.00.

Outside Musical Performances with Other Choirs:

Because the Chancel Chime Choir knows Christ and desires to share their music ministry, performances with other choirs is to be encouraged. The conductor (or a designated conductor) is responsible for all the equipment used offsite. Appropriate notice must be given to the Director of Music (or the Chairperson of the Worship and Music Committee in the absence of a Director) of the performance two weeks before the performance and appropriate notice to the regular conductor (if a designated conductor) and the Property Chairperson. In the case of a designated conductor, the regular conductor is not responsible for the equipment.

Borrowing of equipment:

It would unusual for someone other than the conductor, a designated conductor or a chimer to borrow the equipment. Permission for such borrowing must be

given by the Chairperson of the Worship and Music Committee with notice to the Chancel Chime regular conductor and the Property Chairperson. The regular conductor will not be responsible for the equipment under these circumstances.

ADDENDUM"CURRENT EQUIPMENT January 1, 2006

Three octave set of MalMark chimes, C4-C7

8 table pads

4 tables

11 bended books

11 book risers

2 cloth covers

Church Council March 8, 2006

Hope's
Organizational Chart,
Committee
Responsibilities and
Long Range Planning

COMMITTEES

Building and Grounds Committee

Committee Responsibilities:

1. To develop policies and procedures that will assure continuing up-keep of the physical plant.
2. Develop budgets that accurately reflect the needs, present and future, to assure availability of facilities for all scheduled and contemplated uses.
3. To report status, budget and projected uses to the church council with recommendations for modifications and expansion that will permit current and contemplated programs desired by the congregation.
4. To review and comment on all current and projected expansion projects providing advice and recommendations where appropriate.
5. Provide advice and recommendations to the church council on contract and vendor services that are considered necessary for continued use of the church property.
6. Develop plans and procedures for the implementation of volunteers necessary for in-house maintenance and improvement projects.
7. Develop and implement procedures to obtain congregational input for current and expanded use of the church real property assets.
8. Prepare and submit an annual status report to the church council for inclusion in the Annual Congregational Report.

Christian Education Committee

Committee Responsibilities:

1. To develop policies and procedures for the coordination of the activities of the related committees.
2. To submit monthly reports to the church council on the activities, needs and recommendations of the related committees so that these may accomplish their purposes and goals.
3. To prepare and present an annual congregational summary report of the activities of the committee and related committees for the information of the church council and inclusion in the annual congregational report.
4. To assure the coordination and that resources are available for the related committees to carry out their purposes.

Evangelism Committee

Committee Responsibilities:

1. Develop and implement a visitation program for all newcomers to the church.
2. Coordinate the activities of the related committees providing the resources for them to accomplish the goals.
3. Report monthly to the church council on the activities of this and related committees for their information.
4. Prepare an annual report for inclusion in the congregational annual report describing the activities of this and related committees.
5. Assure prompt contact and visitation of all guests who have signed the guest register.

Finance Committee

Committee Responsibilities

1. Review and comment on the monthly reports of the financial secretary and the treasurer.
2. To continuously monitor the cash management of the congregation policies as they relate to cash flow, both income and expense.
3. Prepare and discuss the annual budget that will be presented to the congregation for approval.
4. Analyze past and present congregational financial trends for interpretation and advice to the church council.
5. Develop, recommend and implement approved guidelines for handling all congregational monies.
6. To oversee the activities of the related committees to present a coordinated financial program for Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Worship and Music Committee

Committee Responsibilities

1. Provide music for worship.
2. Care of the altar and adornment of the sanctuary.
3. Plan for weekly services to be conducted worshipfully and in accordance with the established liturgy approved by the congregation.
4. Review on going procedures for improvement and inclusion of new and special events in the weekly services.
5. To oversee the activities of the related committees to assist in the coordination of the activities of these committee to assure a complete worship experience.

Long Range Planning Committee

In 1995 a Long Range Planning Committee was formed to delve into the mission and programs of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church with the purpose of ascertaining whether or not the existing physical plant (building and grounds) was sufficient and suitably configured to support the present and possible future presence in the community. To “tune in” the committee turned to the congregation for their input and their expectations. The resultant Master Site Plan (MSP) is that detailed on the adjacent pages.

Adopted by the congregation in January 1998, the MSP provides for an orderly potential expansion in three phases culminating in 5, 10 and 20 year steps. These phases were based on a variety of factors including a positive growth attitude. The plan also considered the acquisition of the bordering 3.85 acres, subsequently acquired, to enable the congregation to “broaden their horizons” in mission and programs.

In summary, the MSP was adopted to meet these needs:

- The present and future mission and program as determined by the congregation.
- Response to a steady growth pattern.
- Provide for the ability of the congregation to act as one body at a given time.
- Effect the most efficient and effective use of land and buildings during the expected growth phases.
- Provide resources to reach out to the community in an ever changing environment.
- Provide for nurturing and enhancement of the spiritual well being of the congregation during each of the development phases cited.

For those interested in the details of the study and reports that led to the adopted plan a copy of that report is available in the church office.

Other Committees and Groups

Description of the other committees and groups at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church are included in the handbook of committee responsibilities available at the church office.

Committees and Groups

Acolytes
Adult Bible Study Groups
Adult Christian Education
Altar Guild
Blood Bank
Care Team
Church Choirs
Church Library
Clothing Distribution
Communion Assistants
Fellowship
Food Bank
Greeters
Habitat for Humanity
Hand Chimes
Lay Readers
Life Line
Long Range Planning
Lutheran World Relief
Men's Club
Memorial Gardens
Nursery
Service Committee
Social Ministry
Stewardship
Ushers
Women of the ELCA
World Hunger
Y-Go (Youth Group)

