



Constitution and By Laws

In May of 2002 this set of Constitution and Bylaws was proposed to the members of Messiah Lutheran Church to be adopted on a one-year trial basis. It replaces six (6) boards and Church Council with a nine (9)-member board of lay ministry and makes adjustments in the calling/hiring/firing process. In summary, the Constitution and Bylaws provide a streamlined administrative framework in which a true staff-led church can maximize decision-making effectiveness within an environment of appropriate accountability for God-pleasing ministry.

Research was conducted on several larger growing congregations to find a structure that was more suitable and effective. This structure streamlines the decision making process – empowering the leaders of the church to lead – and freeing members of Messiah to focus on being the church.



**Constitution
Of
Messiah Lutheran Church
St. Charles, Missouri**

Preamble

It is the command of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples should preach the Gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). That Christ's command for His church might be carried out according to His will, He has also commanded that Christians unite in worship, preach the Word, study His Word, witness to all people, encourage one another in prayer, practice fellowship with one another, help each other grow in the Word, serve the needs of all people in Christian love, and administer the Office of the Keys as His church through the local gatherings of people which His Word calls the congregation.

Since the Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to his Word in doctrine and practice and that all things be done decently and in order, we, therefore, the members of Messiah Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

Article I

The name of this congregation is Messiah Lutheran Church, St. Charles, Missouri. The church maintains its principal office at 5911 Hwy 94 South, St. Charles, Missouri 63304. The members of the church may change the principal office from one location to another. Any change of this location shall be recorded by the secretary on these Constitution and Bylaws.

Article II

The Purpose

In response to the love of Jesus Christ and His great commission to us, our purpose is:

- A. "Living to know and share the love of Jesus Christ"



B. To experience the heart of the Messiah by growing spiritually healthy and mature disciples of Jesus who serve Him by serving others. These disciples will do whatever it takes to...

- Know Jesus – be deeply rooted in His Word and sacraments
- Live for Jesus – be meaningfully connected to the body of believers
- Share Jesus – be joyfully sharing Jesus with others.

Matthew 28:18-20: Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Therefore We Are Committed to:

C. Solid Biblical preaching and teaching that is not only true to the Word of God, but also relevant and full of practical application of the Word for living in today’s world.

Matthew 10:7: As you go, preach this message: “The kingdom of heaven is near.” Mark 16:15: He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.” Acts 5:20: “Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people the full message of this new life.”

Ephesians 4:2-5: Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope when you were called – one Lord, one faith, on baptism.

D. Different styles of relevant, meaningful, friendly, praise giving worship of the Lord Jesus.

John 4:23, 24: “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”



Ephesians 5:19, 20: *“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

- E. Ongoing Bible study in small and large groups as well as different types of studies for all age groups.

Colossians 2:6, 7: *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”*

II Timothy 2:2: *“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”*

Hebrews 6:1: *“Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God.”*

I Peter 2:2: *“Like newborn babies crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.”*

- F. An authentic ministry of prayer for both the worshiping community at Messiah as well as encouraging all individuals in an ongoing commitment to a life of prayer.

Matthew 7:7: *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”*

Luke 18:1: *“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.”*

Ephesians 6:18: *“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”*

- G. A well-rounded approach to evangelism with an emphasis on friendship evangelism.



Acts 1:8: *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Philemon 6: *“I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.”*

Acts 2:47: *“Praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people, and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”*

- H. An emphasis on world missions by direct prayer and financial support to missionaries as well as off sight mission trips for those led to help on foreign soil.

Psalm 96:3: *“Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.”*

Matthew 24:14: *“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”*

Mark 16:15: *“He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.’”*

- I. All people using their spiritual gifts for the good of the body of Christ.

Romans 12:6: *“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.”*

Ephesians 4:11-13 & 16: *“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people or works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”*

- J. A vital small group ministry structure within all aspects of the church.

Romans 16:5: *“Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.”*



Acts 20:20: *“You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house.”*

Acts 16:14: *“One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message.”*

- K. Providing Christian support and care both in groups and to individuals who need support, Christian love and care.

Acts 16:33: *“At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.”*

II Chronicles 28:15: *“The men designated by name took the prisoners, and from the plunder they clothed all who were naked. They provided them with clothes and sandals, food and drink, and healing balm. All those who were weak they put on donkeys. So they took them back to their fellow countrymen at Jericho, the city of Palms, and returned to Samaria.”*

Galatians 6:2: *“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”*

- L. A strong focus on ministry to children, youth and families.

Deuteronomy 6:7: *“Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”*

Deuteronomy 11:19: *“Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”*

Proverbs 22:6: *“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”*

Matthew 19:14: *“Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’”*



Article III

Confessional Standards

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran church contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580 to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These confessional writings are the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles', Nicene, Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms and the Formula of Concord.

Article IV

Membership

Section A: Baptized Members – Baptized membership in this church shall consist of all who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who have been placed under the spiritual care of the church through the baptism itself, or by transfer from another Lutheran congregation or by joining the congregation from another Christian church.

Section B: Communicant Membership – Communicant membership in this church shall consist of all persons who trust Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and who have met the qualifications for membership.

Section C: Qualifications For Communicant Membership

1. Christian baptism
2. A personal faith in Jesus Christ for Salvation.
3. Completion of a junior or adult confirmation class, transfer from another Lutheran congregation or a personal profession of faith.
4. Agreement with the church's confessional standard as clarified in Article III.



Section D: Privileges and Responsibilities of Communicant

Membership – Communicant members of this church accept the privilege of church membership and submit themselves to its leadership and discipline. Communicant members are expected to live a life which is in agreement with the Holy Scriptures (leading a Christian life and not manifesting works of the flesh...Galatians 5:19-21), and – within the context of a vital relationship with Jesus Christ – agree to be growing through Word and Sacrament in living out the following discipleship goals for members of the church as they are able and enabled by the Holy Spirit:

1. Acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord;
2. Bible study attendance;
3. Consistent church attendance and participation in Holy Communion;
4. Daily prayer and devotional life;
5. Evangelistic attitude and action;
6. Faithful use of personal spiritual gifts and treasures;
7. Godly love expressed through Christian fellowship.

Communicant members of the church may not belong to any secret, oath bound organizations that are in conflict with the Word of God. (Romans 16:17, I Corinthians 5:11-13, I Corinthians 10:19-20, I John 5:21, I Thessalonians 1:9, Acts 14:15, Numbers 25:1-6, Exodus 20:3-5a)

Article V

The Offices of Pastor and Teacher

The pastoral office of this congregation, as well as that of a called teacher, shall be conferred upon such ministers, teachers, and candidates only as profess and adhere to the confessional standards set forth in Article III of this constitution and are well qualified for their work. Pastors and teachers shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.

Article VI

Officers



The officers of this congregation shall be such officers, boards and teams as the bylaws of this congregation may prescribe.

Article VII

Affiliation – Synodical Membership

This congregation shall be a member of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS) as long as the LCMS conforms to the congregation’s confessional standard.

Nonconformance shall be agreed upon by a two-thirds majority vote of the Voter’s Assembly at a meeting called for that purpose.

“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace” (Ephesians 4:1-3), this congregation shall join with fellow Christians in other congregations in promoting the unity of faith, providing for the proper training of pastors and teachers, and conducting mission work beyond our parochial limits. In accord with these principles, it shall:

- A. Send the required delegates to the conferences and conventions of the LCMS;
- B. Be the duty of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of the LCMS, since they thereby support their own Christ-appointed work.

Article VIII

Property

If at any time a division should take place, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution and the established Bylaws. In the event the congregation should dissolve, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to an LCMS ministry or institution as determined by a majority vote.



Article IX

Amendments To The Constitution

The following articles of the constitution or sections thereof shall be unalterable and irrepealable: III, V, and VII.

Amendments to this Constitution and the Bylaws may be adopted at a regular congregational voters meeting provided:

1. That they do not conflict with the provisions laid down in Article III or with any other article that pertains to scriptural doctrine and practice;
2. That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and presented to the congregation at a previous congregational assembly. Both assemblies shall be announced at least two weeks in advance in written notice to all members of the congregation.
3. The affirmative vote of a two-thirds ($2/3$) majority of the voting membership present at the congregational assembly shall be required for the adoption of an amendment.



**Bylaws
Of
Messiah Lutheran Church
St. Charles, Missouri**

The following are hereby adopted and shall hereafter be effective as the Bylaws of the congregation Messiah Lutheran Church of St. Charles, Missouri.

Article I

**Communicant Membership &
Voting Privileges**

Section 1 – Application for Membership

Applicants for communicant membership shall notify the church office of their intention to join the congregation.

- Transfers – Those with an active membership at another LCMS congregation shall write a letter of request to that congregation for a transfer.
- Reaffirmation – Those whose membership at an LCMS congregation has lapsed shall attend an Adult Instruction Class before making reaffirmation of their faith.
- Confirmation – Those who are new to the Lutheran Church shall take the Adult Instruction Class before public confirmation.

All membership requests shall be processed through the church office with final approval given by the Executive Ministry Team with consultation from the Elders if needed.

Section 2 - Privileges and Duties of Voting Members

Every communicant member who is 18 years of age or older shall have the right to vote on the following matters:

1. The official call or removal of the Senior Pastor. Removal of the Senior Pastor may occur for one of the following reasons: teaching of false doctrine; a scandalous life; dereliction of official duties; or protracted inability to perform his duties.



2. Approve recommended calls of other professional church workers, prior to extending the call.
3. The acquisition or disposal of real property (ie: land, fixed improvements and construction of fixed properties), except for the acquisition or disposal of real property covered in Article IV, Item 7. (Undesignated Bequests and Estates).
4. This disposal of personal (ie: unfixed) property of the church whose original cost exceeds in a fiscal year \$60,000.
5. All long-term borrowing of monies (borrowing of monies with more than a three-year amortization); and the short-term borrowing of monies (borrowing of monies with a maximum three-year amortization) when the total principal of all outstanding short-term borrowing exceeds \$50,000.
6. The adoption of the annual church budget.
7. The election of members for the Board of Lay Ministry
8. Removal of members to the Board of Lay Ministry. Removal of a member of the Board of Lay Ministry may occur for one of the following reasons: teaching of false doctrine, a scandalous life, dereliction in official duties, or protracted inability to perform his/her duties.
9. The merger or dissolution of the church.
10. The amending of the Constitution and Bylaws of the church.
11. Yearly review, consider and act upon a long-range ministry plan as recommended by the Board of Lay ministry. (See Article IV, Item 17)

Section 3 - Meetings

An annual meeting of the church shall be held prior to July 1st of each year, for the purpose of receiving a report on the ministry of the church, adoption of the church budget for the coming fiscal year (August 1 – July 31), and dealing with matters of voting business.

The Board of Lay Ministry, the Chairman of the congregation, the Senior Pastor or any 25 congregational members, by petition, may call a special meeting of the voters, providing that they ensure proper notification has been given to announce this special meeting. Proper notification for any special or annual meeting shall consist of a verbal and written announcement in congregational worship services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately before the meeting date. Notification must include agenda items to be voted on by the congregation.

Whenever a meeting has been properly called, the number of the voting members present shall constitute a quorum with a minimum of 20. All decisions shall be by majority vote with the exception of the amending of the Constitution and By-Laws, the removal of the Senior Pastor, and merger or dissolution of the church, which shall be by two-thirds majority vote of members present. Minutes shall be kept of all regular and special meetings of the church.



Article II

Termination of Communicant Membership

Communicant members shall be removed from the church's membership role with the approval of the Elders and Executive Ministry Team for one of the following reasons only:

1. Death;
2. Personal request of the member for transfer of membership to another church;
3. Personal request of the member for release from membership;
4. "Whereabouts Unknown" for a period of one year or longer;
5. Excommunication and self-exclusion:
 - a. An erring member shall be admonished in accordance with the various steps prescribed in Matthew 28:15-17, whenever that procedure is possible.
 - b. Fruitless admonition of a manifest and impenitent sinner shall result in excommunication from the congregation by the Elders and Executive Ministry Team.
 - c. A member who refuses to submit to church discipline has thereby excommunicated himself.
 - d. After sincere repentance, an excommunicated person shall receive absolution and be reinstated into membership upon the recommendation of the senior pastor and/or assistant pastors, members of the elder team and subsequent approval of the Elders and Executive Ministry Team.
 - e. A person whose communicant membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights of a member of this congregation and all claims upon the property of the congregations as such, or upon any part thereof, so long as he/she is not reinstated into membership.

Article III



Board of Elders

The Board of Elders shall be composed of 8 to 12 male communicant members chosen at the annual meeting of the church. They shall be people who have proven faithful to the Lord and His church. They shall also have been communicant members of the church for at least two years prior to serving on the board and shall not be ministry staff members or employees of the church. They also should be people who attend worship faithfully and are involved in ongoing Bible study and a committed life of growing discipleship.

Because the scriptures are clear on qualifications of an elder, they should also meet the following qualifications based in I Timothy 3:2-7, Titus 1:6-9.

1. **Above reproach, blameless** (*I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6-7*) - Elders must lead by example and demonstrate a lifestyle free of patterns of sin.
2. **Husband of one wife** (*I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6*) - Elders, if married, must be a devoted spouse.
3. **Temperate** (*I Timothy 3:2*) - Elders must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, free from excesses.
4. **Self-controlled** (*I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8*) - Elders must be sober, sensible, wise, balanced in judgment, not given to quick, superficial decisions based on immature thinking.
5. **Respectable** (*I Timothy 3:2*) - Elders must demonstrate a well-ordered life and honorable behavior.
6. **Hospitable** (*I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8*) - Elders must be unselfish with their personal resources. They must be willing to share blessings with others.
7. **Able to teach** (*I Timothy 3:2*) - Elders must be able to communicate truth and sound doctrine in a non-argumentative way.
8. **Not given to drunkenness** (*I Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7*) - Elders must be free from addictions and willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.
9. **Not violent but gentle** (*I Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7*) - Elders must be gentle, patient, and able to exercise self-control in difficult situations.
10. **Not quarrelsome** (*I Timothy 3:3*) - Elders must not be given to quarreling or selfish argumentation.
11. **Not a lover of money** (*I Timothy 3:3*) - Elders must not be stingy, greedy, out for sordid gain, or preoccupied with amassing material things.
12. **Manages his own family well** (*I Timothy 3:4*) - Elders must have a well-ordered household and a healthy family life.
13. **Sees that his children obey him** (*I Timothy 3:4-5, Titus 1:6*) - Elders must be able to manage his own family.
14. **Not a recent convert** (*I Timothy 3:6*) - Elders must not be a new believer. They must have been Christians for long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and depth of their spirituality.



15. **Has a good reputation with outsiders** (*I Timothy 3:7*) – Elders must be well respected by unbelievers and free from hypocrisy.
16. **Not overbearing** (*Titus 1:7*) - Elders must not be stubborn, prone to force opinions on others, or abuse authority. They must be servants.
17. **Not quick-tempered** (*Titus 1:7*) – Elders must not be easily incensed but steady and firm in matters of principle.
18. **Loves what is good** (*Titus 1:8*) - Elders must desire the will of God in every decision.
19. **Upright, holy** (*Titus 1:8*) - Elders must be a devoted Christ follower seeking to be conformed to His image. They must be committed to prayer, worship, the study of Scripture, and the guarding of their own walk.
20. **Disciplined** (*Titus 1:8*) – Elders must be regimented and show constraint in all areas of life.
21. **Does not pursue dishonest gain** (*Titus 1:7*) – Elders must deal fairly with others and their judgments must be based on scriptural principle.
22. **Keeps hold of the deep truths** (*Titus 1:9*) - Elders must be stable in the faith, obedient to the Word of God, continually seeking to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Process for Elder Selection

1. The existing elders shall as a board develop a list of candidates to serve on the Board of Elders for the following ministry year. This list will include any current elders that wish to serve another year.
2. The congregation shall be provided with teaching regarding the biblical qualifications for elders and scriptural role of the elders. The members of the congregation will then be given 30 days to submit prayerfully the names for consideration as elder.
3. Both of these lists (one list from the congregation and one list from the Board of Elders) will be given to both the Executive Ministry Team and the Board of Lay Ministry for the approval of each individual.
4. Upon the approval from the Executive Ministry Team and the Board of Lay Ministry, the Elders will inform appropriate candidates, and the candidates shall be urged to engage in self-appraisal and personal evaluation in light of the scriptural qualifications. Any person may withdraw if he does not aspire to the position of elder. Approved candidates shall also indicate if they wish to be considered for the position of Head Elder.
5. The Board of Elders will then, from the approved list, elect, by secret ballot, a list of 12 Elders and designate one as Head Elder.
6. This list will be presented at the annual congregational meeting for approval. The format will provide for the election or rejection of each individual candidate and position of Head Elder. Each candidate must receive a vote from at least 50% of those in attendance.

Process for Elder Selection - Vacancy



1. The existing elders shall as a board develop a list of candidates to add to the Board of Elders.
2. The list of candidates will be presented to the Executive Ministry Team and the Board of Lay Ministry for approval of each individual.
3. The Board of Elders will then from the approved list elect the new elder(s).
4. All positions filled from vacancies will be subject to the approval of the congregation at the annual meeting.

Membership:

- A. Must be a male member of Messiah for two years or more and be the age of 21 or older.
- B. Elected by the congregation with the only term limits being that an elder cannot serve on the Board more than 6 years in a row. Each Elder shall be asked for a one-year commitment, subject to review, recommitment and reaffirmation by the voting church members each subsequent year.

Role of Elders :

The elders have the responsibility to see that the church remains on a true course biblically, that its members are being appropriately shepherded, that the body is being fed through insightful and accurate biblical teaching according to the Lutheran Confessions, and that the life of the church is being well managed with the assistance of other competent and godly leaders. They are to care about the spiritual and physical well-being of members, encourage through sound doctrine and regularly praying for the sick. (I Peter 5:1-4, Acts 20:28-31, Titus 1:9, James 5:14)

As members of the body you are instructed in scripture to obey your leaders, submit to their authority and respect those who work hard among you. (Hebrews 13:17, I Thessalonians 5:12-13)

Responsibilities of Elders:

1. Meet monthly with Pastors for prayer, Bible and doctrinal study, and oversight of congregational spiritual health.
2. Participate in and give input to annual and long-range congregational strategic plans.
3. Approve annual budget in light of ministry priorities.
4. Spiritual Care being one of the primary focuses, each elder will be assigned a segment of the congregation to make regular calls and visits.
5. Regular monthly meetings may involve going out and making visits to the members of the congregation to help provide for their spiritual care.
6. Participate in the process of calling a Senior Pastor as defined in Art. IV, Item 15 as well as ordained and commissioned staff.



7. Oversee and facilitate the conducting of all public worship services and the administration of the sacraments.
8. Perform a formal review of the Senior Pastor on a bi-annual basis.

Responsibilities of Head Elder:

1. Develop the agenda and chair the monthly Elder Meeting.
2. Appoint elders to certain positions and to serve as advocates for specific ministries. Some of these positions include but not limited to: Secretary of the Elders, Usher Ministry, Youth Ministries, Children's Ministries, Childcare, Music, Altar Guild, Greeters, Circle of Care, . . .
3. Serve on the Board of Lay Ministry.

**Article IV
The Board of Lay Ministry**

The Board of Lay Ministry of the church shall be composed of nine communicant members (male and female) of the church chosen at the annual meeting of the church – Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Head Elder, Treasurer and 5 others. They shall be people who have proven faithful to the Lord and His church. They shall also have been communicant members of Messiah for at least two years prior to sitting on the Board and shall not be ministry staff members or employees of the church. They also should be people who attend worship faithfully and are involved in ongoing Bible study and a committed life of growing discipleship. Elected for three years by the Voters' Assembly (can serve for two consecutive terms).

Members of the Board of Lay Ministry shall serve three-year terms established on a staggered basis, and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Lay Ministry.

Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the Board of Lay Ministry.

Five members shall constitute a quorum, and all actions of the Board shall require a majority vote with a minimum of four affirmative votes in order to be enacted.

In conjunction with the executive ministry team, the Board of Lay Ministry shall be responsible for mobilizing and coordinating the efforts of ad hoc and on-going ministry groups, task forces, and committees as referenced in Article VI (see Article VI).



From April 1st to May 1st of each year, communicant members shall be asked to submit in writing to the Executive Ministry Team or the Board of Lay Ministry the names of individuals for consideration as members of the Board of Lay Ministry. The Board of Lay Ministry and the Executive Ministry Team shall meet together and, from these names, submit for consideration at the annual meeting name(s) of individuals who meet the established criteria for each position open on the Board of Lay Ministry. These names shall be published in two successive written announcements preceding the annual meeting.

In cases of a vacancy on the Board of Lay Ministry, the chairman of the Board of Lay Ministry after consulting with the Senior Pastor shall select a qualified individual to serve in the position until the next annual meeting of the congregation, at which time the congregation shall select an individual to complete the remaining portion for the unexpired term which shall count as a complete term for that individual if the unexpired term to which he is selected exceeds one year at the time of his/her election.

For the sake of good order, effective ministry and accountability the congregation authorizes the Board of Lay Ministry to:

1. Meet quarterly with the Executive Ministry Team of the church and for other special meetings of the board as called by the Chairman or Senior Pastor.
2. Prepare a written evaluation on an annual basis of the Senior Pastor's leadership and performance relative to the overall health and progress of the congregation and its ministries
3. Receive a quarterly report from the Executive Ministry Team on the ministries and activities of the church, and offer evaluation and additional counsel and input concerning the overall ministry of the church. Quarterly, at the direction of the Chairman of the Board of Lay Ministry, the Board shall provide the congregation a status update report concerning ministry activities, ministry plans and a financial status report.
4. Establish the salaries for the members of the ministry staff; review, adjust and act upon an annual budget recommended by the Executive Ministry Team according to areas of ministry (see Article VI, Section C, Item 6) and forward to the congregation for approval of the budget according to areas of ministry. Throughout the year the Board of Lay Ministry will review, revise and approve any adjustments to the annual budget by the Executive Ministry Team, not to exceed five percent of the budget for any specific ministry area.
5. Receive and review, on a monthly basis, a financial report including the receipts and expenditures of the church for the previous month.
6. Negotiate the borrowing of short-term funds for operating needs if necessary for cash flow purposes. Any funds so borrowed shall not exceed \$50,000 outstanding at any time and shall be for three years or less amortization terms.
7. Approve the disposal of unused or obsolete personal property of the church.



8. Establish and approve the disposition of all undesignated gifts, bequests, and estates given to the church. The proposed disposition of undesignated gifts, bequests, and estates shall be incorporated into an expenditure plan, which shall be updated annually. All such receipts and expenditures shall be included in the independent audit financial reports of the church.
9. Appoint from the communicant membership (excluding staff) of the church a financial secretary who shall keep or maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct financial procedures and records of the church relating to receipts and deposits.
10. Appoint from the Board of Lay Ministry a secretary who shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, all minutes from meetings of the Board of Lay Ministry and meetings of the church as required by these Bylaws.
11. Act upon needed ministry staff positions as recommended by the Executive Ministry Team or the call committee. Forward approved recommendations to the Voters' Assembly (Article I, Section 2, Item 2).
12. Approve the Head Elder's appointments to the Elder team.
13. Act upon recommendations from the Executive Ministry Team for the dismissal of any called or commissioned ministry staff member of the church as set forth in Article VI, Section C, Item 3.
14. Act upon recommendations from the Senior Pastor for the selection and removal of called or commissioned members of the Executive Ministry Team as set forth in Article VI, Section C.
15. Meet jointly with the Executive Ministry Team in the case of a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, in order to provide for an acting Senior Pastor, who shall temporarily exercise the functions of the Senior Pastor (see Article VI, Section C, Item 11.) Then establish a search process that shall include a call committee for the purpose of submitting a call recommendation to the Voters' Assembly for filling the position. Call committee members shall be composed of the congregational chairman, vice chairman, an elder and at least three other communicant members. The committee membership should include both male and female members. The Chairman of the congregation shall appoint one member of the ministry staff to serve as an ex officio member of the call committee. Appropriate district officials shall be consulted in establishing a search process.
16. Call a special meeting of the church to deal with any appropriate business.
17. Review and revise the annual and long-term ministry plans recommended by the Executive Ministry Team. Forward approved recommendation to the Voters' Assembly.
18. Provide congregation quarterly ministry and financial status reports.



**Article V
Church Officers**

The congregation shall elect at an annual meeting of the church four officers who have proven faithful to the Lord and His church. The officers shall be Chairman, Vice Chairman, Head Elder, and Treasurer. They shall have been communicant members of Messiah for at least 2 years prior to election and shall not be ministry staff members or employees of the church.

Church officers shall serve 3-year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Desiring to remain faithful to the Scriptures' teaching concerning the authority issues and leadership roles of men and women in the home and in the church, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Head Elder will be males. The Chairman of the church shall have the responsibility to chair the meetings of the church, with the Vice-Chairman serving in his absence. In cases where both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are unable to attend a meeting of the church, the Chairman shall arrange for a member of the Board of Lay Ministry to chair the meeting in his absence

Treasurer - For the sake of good order and accountability, the congregation authorizes the treasurer to:

1. Oversee all efforts of any church staff position managing the church financial resources or accounting functions.
2. Coordinate the preparation of a monthly financial report including the receipts and expenditures of the church for the previous month and submit such reporting to the Board of Lay Ministry.
3. On a yearly basis arrange for an independent financial review of all receipts, expenditures and financial records and present it to the congregation at the annual voters' assembly meeting.
4. Other duties as defined by the Board of Lay Ministry.

Removal of Officers and members of the Board of Lay Ministry– Any officer or member of the Board of Lay Ministry who willfully neglects the duties of the office may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Voting members present in a regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly. (See Article I, Section 3 for procedure)



Article VI

The Executive Ministry Team

Section A: Ministry Staff Members of the Church – The Ministry Staff shall include both ordained clergy and men and women who have been commissioned by the church as a minister of the Gospel. One of the ordained ministers shall be called by the congregation to serve in the position of Senior Pastor. The duties of the ordained ministers shall include, but not be limited to, preaching and teaching the Word of God, performing marriages and funerals, distribution of the sacraments, and visiting the sick. All members of the ministry staff administer the areas of ministry as designated by their job description and/or agreed upon with the Senior Pastor. All members of the ministry staff perform their ministry under the supervision and authority of the Senior Pastor.

Section B: The Executive Ministry Team – While the Office of the Keys and the Public Ministry are given to the local congregation by Christ and His Holy Word, the management, the Public office of Ministry and the spiritual leadership of the church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, shall be vested in and delegated to the Executive Ministry Team. This committee’s key principle role in spiritual leadership is to effectively reach out to seekers and the lost and to equip the convinced/saved for a life of ministry and discipleship. Their authority is derived from the order established in the Scriptures, which gives the title of “elder” (Greek: presbyteros) or “overseer” (Greek: episkopos) to the “pastor/shepherds” (Greek: poimen) of the church who receive financial support from the church for the exercise of their ministry functions (I Timothy 5:17-18; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-2; Acts 20:17 & 28).

The Executive Ministry Team at all times is directly accountable to the Board of Lay Ministry. And the Board of Lay Ministry is directly accountable to the congregation.

I Timothy 5:17-18: “The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain’ and ‘The worker deserves his wages.’”

Titus 1:5-9: “The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God’s work, he must be blameless – not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-



controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.”

I Peter 5:1-2: “To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve.”

Acts 20:17 & 28: “From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.”

The Executive Ministry Team shall oversee the congregation with a servant’s heart and a loving willingness, as examples to the Church. They must take care not to take advantage of the authority vested in them contrary to Scripture, but as a shepherd cares for the sheep, the Executive Ministry Team is to care for the church (I Peter 5:1-4; Philippians 2:5-7; I Corinthians 3:5-7).

I Peter 5:1-4: “To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”

Philippians 2:5-7: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”

I Corinthians 3:5-7: “What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.”

The congregation, in turn, is to follow the leadership of the Executive Ministry Team. This order is established in faithfulness to the Chief Shepherd Christ Jesus, and His plan



to build up the body of Christ (I Thessalonians 5:12-13; Acts 16:4; I Corinthians 16:15-16; Hebrews 13:7 & 13).

I Thessalonians 5:12-13: “Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.”

Acts 16:4: “As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey.”

I Corinthians 16:15-16: “You know that the household of Stephanis were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it.”

Hebrews 13:7 & 13: “Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.”

Section C: Definition of the Executive Ministry Team – Desiring to be faithful to the Scriptures’ teaching concerning leadership roles of men and women in the home and in the church, members of the Executive Ministry Team shall be men from the ministry staff who are called, commissioned and/or ordained. The Executive Ministry Team shall be composed of at least three members of the ministry staff of the church. The Senior Pastor shall serve as the chairman of the team. He shall make recommendations to the Board of Lay Ministry for the selection and removal of a member of the Executive Ministry Team as set forth in the Article IV, Item 14. Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the Executive Ministry Team and all actions of the team shall be by the majority vote of the members present. A quorum shall consist of three members, one of which must be the Senior Pastor. For the sake of accountability and good order, the Executive Ministry Team should consistently seek the counsel and approval, when required, of the Board of Lay Ministry.

For the sake of good order, effective ministry and accountability, the congregation authorizes/delegates the Executive Ministry Team to:

1. Oversee, facilitate, equip and work with the members of Messiah for the conduct and development of existing and new ministries.
2. Select, hire, and dismiss all non-called support staff/employees of the church.
3. Make recommendations to the Board of Lay Ministry for the establishment or changing of any or all ministry positions with the exception of the position of Senior Pastor. Also, make recommendations to the Board of Lay Ministry for



the selection of people for the said positions and the dismissal of people, providing the action is consistent with the Holy Scriptures. (See Article IV, Items 13 & 14.)

4. Present to the Board of Lay Ministry on a quarterly basis, and to the annual meeting of the church on a yearly basis, a report on the ministries and activities of the church in order to report on the state of the church and receive additional counsel and input concerning the overall ministry of the church.
5. Prepare and recommend for approval to the Board of Lay Ministry an annual budget according to areas of ministry; programs; salaries and benefits; physical plant improvements, supplies, maintenance and utilities; insurance; call expenses; debt service; district and synodical support; travel expenses; church offices supplies, etc. (The salaries of the ministry staff are to be set by the Board of Lay Ministry). Prior to establishing the proposed budget, the Executive Ministry Team should seek counsel and input including budget format approval from the Board of Lay Ministry. After the approval of the proposed budget, the Board of Lay Ministry then presents the budget to the Voters' Assembly for its approval. Between the annual meetings of the congregation, the Executive Ministry Team may recommend improvements and/or adjustments to the annual budget for approval from the Board of Lay Ministry not to exceed five percent of the budget of any specific ministry area. (See Article IV, Item 4.)
6. Oversee the budget and present to the Board of Lay Ministry on a monthly basis a financial report including the receipts and expenditures of the church according to the areas of ministry.
7. Oversee the operation, care, and maintenance of the church plant, properties, equipment, and other appurtenances. In the case of emergency building needs, expend necessary funds to make needed repairs.
8. Give input and counsel to the Board of Lay Ministry with regard to the short-term borrowing of monies (borrowing of monies with a maximum three-year amortization).
9. Give input and counsel to the Board of Lay Ministry in regards to the disposal of personal (ie: unfixed) property of the church.
10. Give input and counsel to the Board of Lay Ministry with regard to the disposition of all undesignated gifts, bequests, and estates given to the church.
11. Meet jointly with the Board of Lay Ministry, in the case of a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, in order to provide for an acting Senior Pastor, who shall temporarily exercise the functions of the Senior Pastor.
12. Arrange for the annual church meeting along with the Chairman of the congregation. At this meeting the Executive Ministry Team should inform members on all matters pertaining to the state of ministry in the church.
13. Develop a strategic long-term ministry plan for Messiah; develop an annual ministry plan to coincide with the long-term plan and assist the Board of Lay Ministry and voters with a yearly review.



The Executive Ministry Team is at all times directly responsible to the Board of Lay Ministry. And the Board of Lay Ministry is at all times responsible to the congregation.

Section D – Removal of Senior Pastor– If the Senior Pastor willfully neglects the duties of the office he may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present in a meeting of the Voters’ Assembly called according to regular constitutional processes. (See Article I, Section 3 for procedure) Removal of the Senior Pastor may occur for one of the following reasons: teaching of false doctrine; a scandalous life; dereliction of official duties; or protracted inability to perform his duties.

Article VII

Other Ministry Groups

Recognizing Christ’s call to equip God’s people for works of service (Ephesians 4) and God’s promise that He gives to each Christian spiritual gifts with which to serve Him, the fact that the ministry of the church belongs to the people of the church, and our church’s commitment to mobilize every member of the congregation for ministry in the body of Christ, other ministry groups, task forces, and teams (which may include, but not be limited to: planning groups, stewardship team, educational ministry coordinators team, small group leaders, social ministry team, building study team, feasibility study task forces, parent groups, worship assistants, care teams, evangelism teams, mission groups, etc.) with specific areas of decision-making and responsibilities may be established by the Executive Ministry Team and/or Board of Lay Ministry in order to encourage all members to use their spiritual gifts within the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:7; I Peter 4:10; I Peter 2:9).

I Corinthians 12:7: “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”

I Peter 4:10: “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”



I Peter 2:9: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

Section A – Large Ministries – When large ministries (such as Messiah Lutheran School) justify the services of an Executive Director, that individual shall coordinate that particular ministry and be accountable to the Executive Ministry Team. Their responsibilities would include, but not be limited to...

1. Develop a ministry team for collaborative planning and review.
2. Develop goals and objectives in coordination with entire church ministry.
3. Develop policies and by-laws for the efficient operation of that ministry.
4. Create, initiate, and direct the development of the program.
5. Select, hire, and dismiss all support (non-called) staff/employees.
6. At least quarterly, prepare a written report for presentation to the Executive Ministry Team.